A SHORT

HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY

BY

JOHN M. ROBERTSON

[ISSUED BY THE RATIONALIST PRESS ASSOCIATION, LIMITED]

WATTS & CO.,

17, JOHNSON'S COURT, FLEET STREET, LONDON, E.C.

1902

CORRIGENDA.

P. 157. *For* § 4 read § 3.

P. 165. *For* § 5 *read* § 4.

P. 299. *For* Chapter IV. *read* Chapter V.

PDF created by Rajesh Arya, Gujarat (20 Feb 2025)

CONTENTS.

PREFACE.

PART I.—PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY.

CHAPTER I.—THE BEGINNINGS. PAGE

§ 1. Documentary Clues 1
§ 2. The Earliest Christian Sects 6
§ 3. Personality of the Nominal Founder . . . 12
§ 4. Myth of the Twelve Apostles 17
§ 5. Primary Forms of the Cult 22
§ 6. Rise of Gentile Christism 32
§ 7. Growth of the Christ Myth 43

CHAPTER II.—THE ENVIRONMENT.

§ 1. Social and Mental Conditions in the Roman Empire 49
§ 2. Jewish Orthodoxy 56
§ 3. Jewish Sects: the Essenes 60
§ 4. Gentile Cults 62
§ 5. Ethics: Popular and Philosophic . . . 73

CHAPTER III.—CONDITIONS OF SURVIVAL.

§ 1. Popular Appeal 79
§ 2. Economic Causation 81
§ 3. Organisation and Sacred Books 86
§ 4. Concession and Fixation 91
§ 5. Cosmic Philosophy 95

PART II.—CHRISTIANITY FROM THE SECOND CENTURY TO THE RISE OF MOHAMMEDANISM.

CHAPTER I.—SCOPE AND CHARACTER OF THE UNESTABLISHED CHURCH.

§ 1. Numbers and Inner Life 98

278838

PAGE

§ 2. Growth of the Priesthood 105
§ 3. The Gnostic Movement in the Second Century . 111
§ 4. Marcionism and Montanism 119
§ 5. Rites and Ceremonies 124
§ 6. Strifes over Primary Dogma 125

CHAPTER II.—RELATIONS OF CHURCH AND STATE.

§ 1. Persecutions 130
§ 2. Establishment and Creed-Making . . . 140
§ 3. Reaction under Julian 157
§ 4. Re-establishment: Disestablishment of Paganism 165

CHAPTER III.—FAILURE WITH SURVIVAL.

§ 1. The Overthrow of Arianism 176
§ 2. The Cost of Orthodoxy 181
§ 3. Moral and Intellectual Stagnation . . . 191
§ 4. The Social Failure 198

PART III.—MEDIEVAL CHRISTIANITY.

CHAPTER I.—EXPANSION AND ORGANISATION.

§ 1. Position in the Seventh Century 205
§ 2. Methods of Expansion 209
§ 3. Growth of the Papacy 216

CHAPTER II.—RELIGIOUS EVOLUTION AND STRIFE.

§ 1. Growth of Idolatry and Polytheism . . . 230
§ 2. Doctrines of the Eucharist, Purgatory, and Confession 236
§ 3. Rationalistic Heresies 243
§ 4. Anti-clerical Heresies 247

CHAPTER III.—THE SOCIAL LIFE AND STRUCTURE.

§ 1. The Clergy, Regular and Secular 257
§ 2. The Higher Theology and its Effects . . . 264
§ 3. Christianity and Feudalism 268
§ 4. Influence of the Crusades 275

CHAPTER IV.—THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE.

§ 1. Superstition and Intolerance 281
§ 2. The Inquisition 285

PAGE

§ 3. Classic Survivals and Saracen Contacts . . 291
§ 4. Religion and Art 296

CHAPTER V.—BYZANTINE CHRISTIANITY 299

Part IV.—MODERN CHRISTIANITY.

CHAPTER I.—THE REFORMATION.

§ 1. Moral and Intellectual Forces 308
§ 2. Political and Economic Forces 313
§ 3. Social and Political Results 324
§ 4. Intellectual Results 333

CHAPTER II.—PROGRESS OF ANTI-CHRISTIAN THOUGHT.

§ 1. The Physical Sciences 348
§ 2. Philosophy, Cosmic and Moral 354
§ 3. Biblical and Historical Criticism . . . 356

CHAPTER III.—POPULAR ACCEPTANCE.

§ 1. Catholic Christianity 362
§ 2. Protestant Christianity 368
§ 3. Greek Christianity 376

CHAPTER IV.—THE RELATION TO PROGRESS.

§ 1. Moral Influence 385
§ 2. Intellectual Influence 390
§ 3. Conclusion and Prognosis 396

SYNOPSIS OF LITERATURE 401
INDEX 417

PDF created by Rajesh Arya, Gujarat (20 Feb 2025)

PREFACE.

AN attempt to write the history of Christianity in the space of an average novel is so obviously open to objections that, instead of trying to parry them, I shall merely state what seems to me the possible compensation of brevity in such a matter. It is or may be conducive to total comprehension, to coherence of judgment, and in a measure even to the understanding of details. A distinguished expert in historical and philological research has avowed that specialists sometimes get their most illuminating ideas from a haphazard glance into a popular and condensed presentment of their own subject. Without hoping so to help the experts, I humbly conceive that the present conspectus of Christian history may do an occasional service even to an opponent by bringing out a clear issue. Writers of a different way of thinking have done as much for me.

The primary difficulty is of course the problem of origins. In my treatment of this problem, going as I do beyond the concessions of the most advanced professional scholars, I cannot expect much acquiescence for the present. It must here suffice to say, first, that the data and the argument, insofar as they are not

fully set forth in the following pages, have been presented in the larger work entitled *Christianity and Mythology*, or in the quarters mentioned in the Synopsis of Literature appended to this volume; and, secondly, to urge that opponents should read the study on the Gospels by Professor Schmiedel in the new *Encyclopædia Biblica* before taking up their defensive positions. But so far am I from supposing my own solutions to be definitive that I desire here to avow a modification of opinion made since the first part of the book was printed. It is there assumed that the received translation of a familiar passage (Luke xvii. 21), "The kingdom of God is within you," is right. On challenge and reflection I have to admit that it is not: the proper translation is almost certainly "in your midst"; and the passage thus falls in line with the other accounts in Luke of the kingdom of heaven as a religious movement or communion. My line of argument is not here affected; but it may well be that some other such necessary correction might somewhere impair it.

One of the drawbacks of short histories is that in them at times a disputable proposition has to be summarily put. I doubt, however, whether this occurs oftener in the following pages than in lengthy treatises, where full discussion is fairly to be expected. For instance, I have held that the reference in Rev. ii. 8 to "the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan," is to the Pauline or other Gentilising Jew-

Christists. That is the view of Renan. Harnack, who passes for a more solid authority, pronounces summarily that the phrase is cast by Jew-Christists at orthodox Jews. Such a decision seems to me to be irrational, but it is impossible in such a work to give space to a refutation, where Harnack has offered no argument on the other side in a monumental treatise. The same authority has justified masses of conformist historiography by the simple dogmatic assertion that the time is near at hand when men will universally recognise, in matters of Christian origins, "the essential rightness of tradition, with a few important exceptions." In putting forth a sketch which so little conforms to that opinion, I would but claim that it is not more unjudicial in its method than more conservative performances.

After the period of "origins" has been passed, there is happily less room for demur on any grounds. The statements of fact in the second and third parts are for the most part easily to be supported from the testimony of standard ecclesiastical historians; and the general judgments sometimes cited in inverted commas, in all four parts, are nearly always from orthodox writers. What is special to the present treatise is the sociological interpretation. It was indeed to the end of such interpretation that the researches here summarised were begun, over sixteen years ago; and in a documented work on *The Rise of Christianity, Sociologically Considered*, I hope more fully to present it. But as my first perplexity was to

ascertain the real historical *processus*, I have never subordinated that need to the desire for explanation.

It hardly needs actual experience of the risks of error and oversight in a condensed narrative to convince one of the difficulty of escaping them. Where no single authority is found infallible, I must at times have miscarried, were it only because I have aimed at something beyond a condensation of current accounts. No criticism, therefore, will be more highly valued by me than one which corrects my errors of fact.

In order to cover the ground within the compass taken, it was absolutely necessary to digest the subject-matter under general heads; and the chronological movement may in consequence be less clear than in histories which proceed by centuries. As a partial remedy, dates have been frequently inserted in the narrative, and it is hoped that the full index will help to meet the difficulty which may sometimes be felt as to where a given name or episode should be looked for.

It is perhaps needless to add that the appended Synopsis of Literature does not in the least pretend to be a bibliography for professed students. It is designed merely as a first help to painstaking readers to search and judge for themselves on the problems under notice.

December, 1901.

PDF created by Rajesh Arya, Gujarat (20 Feb 2025)

PART I.—PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY.

CHAPTER I.

THE BEGINNINGS.

§ 1. *Documentary Clues.*

In the ancient history of religions, as in the ancient history of nations, the first account given of origins is almost always a myth. A divine or worshipped founder is craved by the primitive imagination no less for cults and institutions, tribes and polities, than for the forms of life and the universe itself; and history, like science, may roughly be said to begin only when that craving for first causes has been discredited, or controlled, by the later arising instinct of exact observation. Such a check or control tends to be set up by the presence of intelligently hostile forces, as in the case of the religion of Mohammed, whose teaching warred with and was warred on by rival cultures from the first, and whose own written and definite doctrine forbade his apotheosis. Some of the early Christian sects, which went far towards setting up independent cults, had their origins similarly defined by the pressure of criticism from the main body. But before the Christian system had taken organised historic form, in virtue of having come into the heritage of literary and political method embodied

in the Greco-Roman civilisation, it is rarely possible to trust the record of any cult's beginnings, even where it professes to derive from a non-supernatural teacher; so ungoverned is the myth-making instinct in the absence of persistent criticism. Buddha, Zoroaster, and Moses are only less obviously mythical figures than Krishna, Hercules, and Osiris. Of the Christian cult it can at best be said that it takes its rise on the border-land between the historical and the unhistorical, since any rational defence of it to-day admits that in the story of its origins there is at least an element of sheer myth.

The oldest documents of the cult are ostensibly the Epistles of Paul; and concerning these there are initial perplexities, some being more or less clearly spurious—that is, very different from or much later in character than the rest, while all of the others show signs of interpolation. Taken as they stand, however, they reveal a remarkable ignorance of the greater part of the narratives in the Gospels, and of the whole body of the teachings there ascribed to Jesus. In three respects only do the Pauline writings give any support to the histories later accepted by the Christian Church. They habitually speak of Jesus as crucified, and as having risen from the dead; they contain one account of the institution of the Lord's Supper, in agreement with the gospel account; and they make one mention of "the twelve." But the two latter allusions occur in passages (1 Cor. xi. and xv.) which have every mark of interpolation; and when they are withdrawn the Pauline letters tell only of a cult, Jewish in origin, in which a crucified Jesus—called the Messiah or Christos or Anointed One—figures as a saving sacrifice, but counts for absolutely

nothing as a teacher or even as a wonder-worker. A Eucharist or religious meal is celebrated in his name, but no mention is made of any teaching uttered by the founder. And nothing in the epistles enables us even to date them independently of the gospel narratives, which they so strangely fail to confirm. Thus the case stands with the New Testament very much as with the Old. As the Book of Judges reveals a state of Hebrew life quite incompatible with that described in the Pentateuch as having preceded it, so do the epistles of Paul reveal a stage of Christist propaganda incompatible with any such prior development as is set forth in the gospel. And the conclusion in the two cases is the same: that the documents setting forth the prior developments are not only later in composition but substantially fictitious, even where they do not tell of supernatural events.

What needs to be explained in both cases is the way in which the later narratives came to be compiled. Within a hundred years from the date commonly assigned to the Crucifixion there are Gentile traces of a Jesuist or Christist movement deriving from Jewry, and possessing a gospel or memoir as well as some of the Pauline and other epistles, both spurious and genuine; but the gospel then current is seen to have contained some matter not preserved in the canonical four, and to have lacked much that those contain. Of those traces the earliest are found in one epistle of Clement called Bishop of Rome (fl. about 100), which, whether genuine or not, is ancient, and in the older form of the epistles ascribed to the Martyr Ignatius (d. about 115 ?) of which the same may be said. About the middle of the second century the writings of Justin Martyr tell of a Christist memoir, but show no

knowledge of the Pauline epistles. All alike tell of a spreading cult, with a theology not yet coherently dogmatic, founding mainly on a crucified Jesus, faith in whom ensures salvation.

Like the letters of Paul, those ascribed to Clement and Ignatius tell of schisms and strifes in the churches: that is the constant note of Christian history from first to last. As to rites, we have but a bare mention of the eucharist and of baptism; the story of the founder's parentage is still unknown, and his miracles are as unheard of as most of his teachings. There is nothing in Clement, or in the older Ignatian epistles, or in that ascribed to Polycarp (circa 150), or in that of Barnabas (same period), to show knowledge of the existing gospels of Luke or John; a solitary parallel to Luke being rather a proof that the passage echoed had been taken from some earlier document; and the gospel actually cited as late as Justin is certainly not identical with either Mark or Matthew. Even from Paul there is hardly any quotation; and Clement, who mentions or is made to mention his epistle to the Corinthians, pens a long passage in praise of love which has no quotation from the apostle's famous chapter on that head, though it would have seemed made for his purpose. In view of their lax way of quoting the Old Testament we may infer that the early fathers or forgers had few manuscripts; and it is plain that they set no such store by Christian documents as they did by the Jewish; but the fact remains that they fail to vouch for much even of those Pauline epistles which commonly rank as incontestable. At times, as in the Pauline use of the word *ektroma* (1 Cor. xv. 8), which occurs in a similar phrase in one of the Ignatian epistles, there is reason

to conclude that the "apostolic" writing has been interpolated in imitation of the "post-apostolic."

It does not indeed follow that documents or chapters not quoted or utilised by the fathers were in their day non-existent. The letters of Paul, supposing them to be genuine, would in any case be only gradually made common property. All the evidence goes to show that the early Christians were for the most part drawn from the illiterate classes; and the age of abundant manuscripts would begin only with the age of educated converts. But what is inconceivable is that one so placed as Paul should never once cite the teachings of the Founder, if such teachings were current in his day in any shape; and what is extremely improbable is that one so placed as Clement, or one forging or interpolating in his name, should possess Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians as it now stands, and yet should barely mention it in a letter to the same church dealing with almost the same problems. In the first case, we are forced to conclude that the gospel narratives were non-existent for the writer or writers of the Pauline epistles up to the point of the two interpolations which allege an accepted tradition; and that the Pauline epistles themselves are nowhere quite certainly genuine. Such irremovable doubt is the Nemesis of the early Christian habits of forgery and fiction.

There emerges, however, the residual fact that Paul ranked in the second century as a historical and natural personage, in whose name it was worth while to forge; even as for Paul's period Jesus was a historical personage, not supposed to be supernaturally born, though credited with a supernatural resurrection. Broadly speaking, the age of an early

Christian document is found to be in the ratio of its narrative bareness, its lack of biographical myth, its want of relation to the existing gospels. As between the shorter and the longer form of the Ignatian epistles, the question of priority is at once settled by the frequent citations from the gospels and from Paul in the latter, and the lack of them in the former. But all the documents alike appear to point to a movement which took its rise among the Jews long before the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem by Titus in the year 70, and subsisted in Jewry long afterwards; and, as the Jewish environment lacked many of the forces of change present in the Gentile, it is to the Jewish form of the cult that we must first look if we would trace its growth.

§ 2. *The Earliest Christian Sects.*

The first properly historical as distinct from the "scriptural" notices of the Church at Jerusalem tell of a quasi-Christian sect there, known as Ebionites or *Ebionim*, a Hebrew word which signified simply "the poor." From the point of view of the Gentile Christians of the end of the second century they were heretics, seeing that they used a form of the Gospel of Matthew lacking the first two chapters, denied the divinity of Jesus, and rejected the apostleship of Paul. As they likewise rejected the Hebrew prophets, accepting only the Pentateuch, there is some reason to suppose that they were either of Samaritan derivation or the descendants of an old element in the Judean population which, from the time of Ezra onwards, had rejected the later Biblical writings as

the Samaritans did. On either view it would follow that the Jesuist movement rooted from the first in a lower stratum of the population, hostile to orthodox or Pharisaic Judaism, as were the Sadducees among the upper classes. The Samaritans made special account of Joshua (=Jesus), having a book which bore his name; and we shall see later that that name was anciently a divine one for some Syrian populations.

Later notices bring to light the existence of a smaller sect, called by the Greeks *Nazoraioi*, Nazarites or Nazaræans, the term said in the Acts of the Apostles (xxiv. 5) to have been applied to the early Jesuists, and often applied in that book as well as in the gospels to Jesus. According to one account this sect objected to be called Christians, though it appears to have been on the assumption of their derivation from the first Christians that they had not earlier been stamped as heretics. Through the two sects under notice may be gathered the probable development of early Jesuism.

It cannot have been from the place-name Nazareth that any Jesuist sect were first called Nazaræans, a term standing either for the variously-spelt *Nazir* (Nazarite, or, properly, Nazirite) of the Old Testament, or for a compound of the term *netzer* (=a branch), used in the passage of Isaiah (xi. 1) supposed to be cited in the first gospel (ii. 23). Even the form "Nazarene," sometimes substituted in the gospels for the other, could not conceivably have been, to start with, the name for a sect founded by a man who, like the gospel Jesus, was merely said to have been reared at a village called Nazareth or Nazara, and never taught there. In none of the Pauline or other canonical epistles, however, is Jesus

ever called Nazarite, or Nazarene, or "of Nazareth"; and the Ebionite gospel, lacking the Nazareth story, would lack any such appellation. The Ebionite sect, then, appears to have stood for the first form of the cult, and to have developed the first form of gospel; while the later Nazaræan sect appears to be either a post-Pauline but Judaic growth from the Ebionite roots, or a post-Pauline grafting of another movement on the Jesuism of the Ebionites.

Ebionism, to begin with, whether ancient and quasi-Samaritan or a product of innovation in the immediately pre-Roman period, is intelligible as the label of a movement which held by the saying "Blessed are ye poor" or "poor in spirit," found in the so-called Sermon on the Plain and Sermon on the Mount (Luke vi. 20; Matt. v. 3). In poverty-stricken Jewry, with a prophetic and proverbial literature in which, as generally in the East, the poor are treated with sympathy, such a label would readily grow popular, as it had done for the Buddhist "mendicants" in India. Its association, however, with a cult of a slain and Messianic Jesus raises the question whether the latter was not the germ of the movement; and there are some grounds for supposing that the sect may have arisen around one Jesus the son of Pandira, who is mentioned in the Talmud as having been hanged on a tree and stoned to death at Lydda, on the eve of a Passover, in the reign of Alexander Jannæus. It was customary to execute important offenders at that season; and as the Paschal feast had a specifically atoning significance, a teacher then executed might come to be regarded as an atoning sacrifice. But there are traces in the Old Testament of a Messianic movement connected with

the name Jesus at some uncertain period before the Christian era. In the book of Zechariah, of which the first six chapters appear to be much later than the rest, there is named one Jesus (*Heb.* Joshua), a high priest, who figures Messianically as "the Branch," and is doubly crowned as priest and king. In the obscurity which covers most of the prophetic literature, it is difficult to say for what historic activities this piece of symbolism stands; but it must have stood for something. From it, in any case, we gather the fact that much stress was laid on the symbol of "the Branch" (or "sprout"), called in the present text of Zechariah *tsemach*, but in Isaiah *nazar* or *netzer*. Among the Gentiles that symbol belonged to the worships of several Gods and goddesses—as Mithra, Attis, Apollo, and Dêmêtêr—and appears to have meant the principle of life, typified in vegetation; among the Jews it was certainly bound up with the general belief in a coming Messiah who should restore Jewish independence. It is not impossible, then, that a Messianic party were early called "Netzerites" or "Nazaræans" on that account; and such a sect could in the Judaic fashion find all manner of significances in the name of the high priest, since "Jesus" (=Joshua) signified Saviour, and the ancient and mythical Joshua was a typical deliverer. The Mosaic promise (Deut xviii. 15) of a later prophet and leader, which in the Acts is held to apply to the crucified Jesus, had formerly been held by Jews to apply to the Joshua who succeeded Moses; and in that case there is reason to surmise that an older myth or cult centring round the name had given rise to the historical fiction of the Hebrew books. But the subject must remain obscure. There is even some

doubtful evidence of the later existence of a sect of "Jesseans," possibly distinct from the historical "Essenes," who may have founded on Isaiah's "Branch from the roots of Jesse."

The following, then, are the historical possibilities. A poor sect or caste of *Ebionim*, marked off from orthodox Jewry, and akin to the population of Samaria, may have subsisted throughout the post-exilic period, and may either have preserved an old Jesuist cult with a sacrament or adopted a later Samaritan movement. From that might have been developed the "Nazarene" sect of Christist history. On the other hand, a sect of "Nazaræans," holding by the Messianic name of Jesus, *may* have existed in the pre-Roman period, but may have come to figure specially as Ebionim or "poor" when the earlier or political form of Messianic hope waned. Their name may also have led to their being either confused or conjoined with the "Nazirites" of Jewry, a numerous but fluctuating body, under temporary vows of abstention. But that body, again, may have become generally Messianist, and may have adopted the Messianic "Branch" in the verbalising spirit so common in Jewry, while continuing to call itself Nazarite in the old sense. It is indeed on record that some Jews made vows to "be a Nazarite when the Son of David should come"; and such were free to drink wine on Sabbaths, though not on week days. Such Nazarites could have constituted the first sacramental assemblies of the Christists. And as the Hebrew *Nazir* (Sept. Gr. *Nazoraios*) had the meaning of "consecrated" or "holy to the Lord," the early Gentile Christians may very well have translated the word into their own languages instead of

transliterating it. On that view the *hagioi* or "saints" of the Acts and the epistles and the Apocalypse may have strictly stood for "the Nazirites," "the *devoti*."

Seeing, however, that the later Nazaræans are reported to have adopted the (obviously late) first and second chapters of Matthew, while the Ebionites rejected them; and seeing that these chapters, embodying the story of the flight into Egypt, make Jesus at once a Jewish and a Gentile Christ, it would appear that the Gentile movement had then reacted on the Jewish, and that the ultra-Jewish Jesuists had now relinquished the name of Nazaræan to the less rigid, who at this stage probably used a Greek gospel. Finally, as the original sense of "Nazirite" implied either a Judaic vow—irksome to the Gentile Christians, and probably to many of the Jewish—or a specially Judaic character in the founder, and as the political implication of the "netzer" (supposing that to have adhered to the sect-name) was anti-Roman, there would arise a disposition to seek for the term another significance. This, doubtless on the suggestion of Gentiles accustomed to hear Jewish sectaries called "Galileans," was found in the figment that the founder, though declared to have been Messianically born in Bethlehem, had been reared in the Galilean village of Nazareth or Nazara. Instead of being a historical datum, as is assumed by so many rationalising historians, that record is really a pragmatic myth superimposed on the Bethlehem myth. The textual analysis shows that wherever it occurs in the gospels and Acts the name Nazareth has been foisted on the documents.

Hence, however, arose the Greek form "Nazarenos,"

which finally became to a certain extent imposed on the canonical gospels, but especially on that of Mark, which appears to have been redacted under Roman authority in the interests of ecclesiastical order. Naturally, the Latin Vulgate adopted the same term throughout the Gospels and Acts, save in the crucial text, Matt. ii. 23. Otherwise the texts are almost wholly in favour of the form "Nazoraios"—that is, Nazaræan or Nazirite.

§ 3. *Personality of the Nominal Founder.*

Even for minds wont to see mere myth in the idea of such long-worshipped Saviours as Apollo and Osiris, Krishna and Mithra, it cannot but be startling to meet for the first time the thought that there is no historic reality in a figure so long revered and beloved by half the human race as the Jesus of the gospels. It was only after generations of scrutiny that rationalism began to doubt the actuality of the Teacher it had unhesitatingly surmised behind the impossible demigod of the records. The first, indeed, to see in him sheer myth were the students who were intent chiefly on the myths of action in the story: to return to the teaching as such was to recover the old impression of a real voice. It is only after a further analysis—a scrupulous survey of the texts—that the inquirer can realise how illusory that impression really is.

The proposition is not that the mere lateness of the gospels deprives them of authority as evidence (for they proceeded on earlier documents), but that throughout they are demonstrably results of accretion through several generations, and that the earliest

sections were put together long after the period they profess to deal with. The older portions of the Pauline epistles show no knowledge of any Jesuine biography or any Jesuine teaching—a circumstance which suggests that the Jesus of Paul is much more remote from Paul's day than is admitted by the records. Later, the Christian writers are found to have certain narratives, evidently expanded from generation to generation, till at the end of the second century there exist the four canonical gospels, which, however, are not known to have been even then completed. Celsus, in his anti-Christian treatise, supposed to have been written between 170 and 180, speaks of the gospels as having undergone endless alteration; and additions were still possible after the time of Origen, who weakly replied to Celsus that the alterations were the work of heretics. Side by side with the four there had grown up a multitude of "apocryphal" gospels, of which some were long as popular as the canonical, though all were ultimately discarded by the Councils of the Church. The principle of exclusion was essentially that of the tentative criticism of modern times—the critical sense of the inferiority of mere tales of wonders to narratives which contained, besides wonders, elements of moral instruction.

In natural course, criticism first rejects miraculous episodes, next excludes teachings which profess to come from a God-man, and then seeks to infer a personality from those which are left; but inasmuch as those, like the rest, are disparate and even contradictory, the process usually ends in an avowedly arbitrary selection. And to all such selection the loyal study of the texts is fatal. To put aside, as

some still do, the fourth gospel, and then take a stand on the synoptics, is merely to arrest factitiously the critical process, which, when consistently pursued, leads to the conviction that the synoptics were built up by the same order of impulses, under the same conditions of unchecked invention and interpolation, as gave rise to the most obvious fictions in the gospel of "John." We are led without escape to the conclusion that no strain of teaching in the gospels can be fathered on the shadowy founder, who for Paul is only a crucified phantom. The humanistic teachings are no more primordial, no less capable of interpolation, than the mystical and the oracular. Some of the best sayings are among the very latest; some of the narrowest belong to the earliest tradition. Collectively, they tell of a hundred hands.

Realising that the nominal founder of Paul's Jesuism may possibly be the slain Jesus Pandira of the Talmud, a hundred years "before Christ," we next ask whether any such founder must not be supposed to have taught *something*, to make men see in him a Messiah and preserve his name. The answer is that the name alone was a large part of the qualification for a Jewish Messiah; that the chance of his execution on the eve of the Passover would give it for some Jews a mystic significance; and that a story of his resurrection, a story easily floated in case of an alleged sorcerer, such as the Talmudic Jesus, would complete the conditions required for the growth of a myth and a cult, seeing that the Jews traditionally expected the Messiah to come at midnight of the day of Passover. Doubtless the alleged sorcerer may have been an innovating teacher. It is quite possible, indeed, that as a bearer of the fated name he may have made

Messianic claims: the form of death said to have been inflicted on him suggests energetic priestly or political hostility. But of his utterances history preserves no trace: even in the Talmud his story has passed into legendary form. Thus it is not even certain that the earliest Jesuism took shape round the memory of an actual man. The mythic Joshua (Jesus) of the Old Testament is seen to have been in all likelihood, like Samson, an ancient Semitic but non-Jewish Sun-God, his name, "the Saviour," being a common divine epithet; and as he is in Arab tradition the son of the mythic Miriam (Mary), it may be that the roots of the historic Christian cult go back to an immemorial Semitic antiquity, when already the name of Jesus was divine. In the shadow of that name its origins are hidden.

When the historic Church set about a statement of its history, it could not even fix satisfactorily the year of its supposed founder's birth; and the "Christian era" was made to begin some years—two, three, four, five, or eight—after those on which the chronologists were later fain to fix, by way of conforming to their most precise document. Their data, however, have no more value than any other guess. So little of the semblance of historical testimony do the gospels yield that it is impossible to establish from them any proposition as to the duration of the God-man's ministry; and the early Church in general held by the tradition that it lasted exactly one year, an opinion which again points straight to myth, since it is either a dogmatic assumption based on the formula of "the acceptable year of the Lord," or a simple reversion to the story of the Sun-God. Of the life of the alleged teacher from the age of twelve to thirty

—another mythological period—there is not a single trace, mythical or non-mythical, though at his death he is represented as the centre of a large and adoring following. Ultimately, his birth was placed at the winter solstice, the birth-day of the Sun-God in the most popular cults; and while that is fixed as an anniversary, the date of his crucifixion is made to vary from year to year in order to conform to the astronomical principle on which the Jews, following the sun-worshippers, had fixed their Passover. Between those fabulous points everything the gospels affirm as biographical fact is fortuitous or purposive invention, which on scientific analysis "leaves not a wrack behind" in the nature of objective history.

Before accepting such a verdict the sympathetic seeker is apt to grasp at the old argument that such a figure as the gospel Jesus cannot have been created either by fortuitous fable or by fictions; that its moral stature is above that of any of the men we can trace in the gospel-making period; that its spiritual unity excludes the theory of a literary mosaic. It must first be answered that these positions beg the question and falsify the data. That the figure of the gospel Jesus is actually devoid of moral unity is made clear by the very attempts to unify it, since they one and all leave out much of the records; and the claim to moral superiority collapses, even apart from the obvious fact that the texts are aggregations, as soon as we compare them with the contemporary and previous ethical literature of the Jews, Greeks, Romans, and Hindus. There is not one teaching in the gospels that is not there paralleled; and the passages which have been claimed as most characteristic—for instance, the Sermon on the Mount—are mere compilations of earlier Jewish

utterances. Thus the unity credited to the records, and the personality ascribed to the founder, are but creations of the same sympathetic human imagination that wove tissues of poetry and pathos round the figures of Dionysos and Buddha, and framed for the cult of Krishna its most impressive document when the cult was already ancient beyond reckoning. As man has made his Gods, so he has made his Christs: it would be strange indeed if the faculty which wrought the one could not create the other.

§ 4. *Myth of the Twelve Apostles.*

In one of the Pauline epistles, which are usually understood to belong to the generation immediately following on that of the founder, there is mention of three chief Apostles with whom Paul had disputes, but none of any contemporary group of Twelve; and the only historical allusion to the latter number is in one of the interpolations in First Corinthians, where it appears to be a patch upon a patch. In the Acts of the Apostles, which though a fraudulent is an ancient compilation, there is a preliminary story of the election of an apostle to fill the place of Judas, deceased and disgraced; but not only is there no further pretence of such a process of completion, the majority of the twelve themselves speedily disappear from the history. Once more we are dealing with a myth. In the Apocalypse, again, after the original Judaic document has pictured a New Jerusalem with twelve gates and angels, named after the twelve tribes, the Christian interpolator has betrayed himself by the awkward invention of twelve "basement courses"

named after the "twelve Apostles of the Lamb," where a Christian author would have given the apostles the gates if anything, had a list of twelve Jesuist apostles existed. In heaven the Lamb is surrounded, not by twelve disciples, but by the "four and twenty presbyters" of the older cult, which knew no divinely-ordained *cortège* of twelve.

In the gospels the lack of historic foundation is no less decisive. Circumstantial but irreconcilable accounts, obviously mythical, are given of the selection of four or five apostles, whereafter the narratives, without a word of preparation or explanation, proceed to a sudden constitution of the group of twelve, with only the mythological detail, in one case, that they were "called" by the Master on a mountain. Thus the element of the Twelve is not even an early item in the records, but has been imposed on documents which set out with no such datum, but with primary groups of five, four, and three.

The historical solution of the problem as to the source of the fiction is now tolerably certain. It is on record that the Jewish High Priest of the latter days of the Temple, and after him the Patriarch at Tiberias, employed certain "Apostles" as tribute-collectors and supervisors of the many faithful Jews scattered throughout the neighbouring kingdoms. By common Jewish usage these would number twelve. As the dispersed Jewish race multiplied abroad after the fall of the Temple, it is probable that under the upper grade of twelve there was created a body of seventy-two collectors, who answered to the traditional number of "the nations" in Jewish lore. Such a body is the probable basis for the admittedly mythical "seventy" or "seventy-two" of the third Gospel. At

this stage the twelve appear to have exercised chiefly teaching and regulative functions, for it is clear that the quasi-Christian document, *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, recovered in 1873 and published in 1883, was originally a purely Jewish manual of moral exhortation, and as such bore its existing title. To the six or seven purely Judaic and non-Jesuist chapters which seem to constitute the original document, and which contain passages copied in the so-called Sermon on the Mount, there were gradually added others, introducing the rites of baptism and the eucharist, the name of Jesus, the doctrine of the Trinity, and various rules of economic procedure. In this gradual fashion a Jesuist cult, in which Jesus is called the "servant" of God, was grafted on an originally Judaic moral teaching, the prestige of the Jewish "Twelve Apostles" being all the while carried on. It was to give a Christian origin for this document that the gospel myth of the Twelve Apostles was framed. After the time of Athanasius, the expanded document, being still unduly Judaic and otherwise unsuitable for the purposes of the organised Church, passed into disuse; but the myth remained.

As regards the three "chief" apostles named in one of the Pauline epistles, there is a reasonable presumption that they were either leading propagandists of the Jesuist cult as it existed at the time of the writing, or so reputed by later tradition; but the assumption that they had been associates and disciples of the founder must be abandoned with the rest of the gospel tradition. They were necessarily woven into the gospel narrative by the later compilers; but the Epistle to the Galatians lies under the general suspicion of having been interpolated, if not wholly

forged; and its very naming of the Judaic apostles is as much a ground for question as a datum for construction. It is probable, further, that the title "brethren of the Lord" was originally a group-name, and that the literal construction of it was a misconception by the later interpolators of the epistles and the gospels. The name of Peter, finally, became a nucleus for many myths; and the two epistles which bear his name have so little relation to the personality set forth in the gospels that both have been widely discredited as forgeries; the second having indeed been so reputed in the days of Eusebius. The Simon-Petros (Cephas) of the gospels, however, is in himself a mere literary creation, all that holds good being the fact that a tradition grew round the names in question, both of which hint of mythology,—Petros ("the Rock") being the name of an Egyptian God and of the popular Eastern deity Mithra; and Simon the name of a no less popular Semitic God. In his final aspect as leader of the twelve, basis of the Church, and keeper of the heavenly keys, Peter combines the attributes of Mithra and of Janus, both official deities of the Roman military class, as well as of the Egyptian Petra—who is door-keeper of heaven, earth, and the under world.

The Epistle of James, by whomsoever written, is in no sense a Christist document—containing as it does not a single Jesuist or Christian doctrine, save perhaps the appended invective against the rich, which is Ebionitic. Of its two namings of Jesus, one is clearly an interpolation, and the other is presumptively so. There remains only a moral exhortation to Jews meeting in synagogues, a teaching strictly comparable to the original and pre-Jesuine "Teaching

of the Twelve Apostles," though the epistle makes no mention of any other apostles. Such writing tells of an essentially different propaganda from that of the Christists proper; and its preservation by them testifies to its priority. The epistles ascribed to John, on the contrary, belong to a considerably later period; telling as they do of a fanatical movement which swears by the name of Jesus the Christ as one who has died to take away sin, but which is full of apprehension as to the advent and functions of a number of Antichrists.

Judas (Ioudas), of whom there is no mention in any of the epistles, and whose traditional treason is not recognised in the lately-recovered "Gospel of Peter," or in the pseudo-Pauline reference to "the twelve," is a late creation; having probably taken shape first as a simple *Ioudaios*, "a Jew," in an early Christian mystery play of the crucifixion and resurrection. Mythologically, the conception may derive from the *Diabolos* or "Adversary" of Persian lore, as Judas in the Gospels is called "a devil"; and the tradition which gave him red hair assimilated him to Typhon, the slayer of the Egyptian Saviour-God, Osiris. The story of the betrayal in the gospels is in any case fabulous, and its presence can be best explained on the theory that such a mystery-play, arising among the Gentiles, would represent a Jew as betraying the Lord, even as the twelve were represented as forsaking their master. A bag to hold the blood-money would be a dramatic accessory, and would originate the view that Judas had been the treasurer of the apostolic group.

§ 5. *Primary Forms of the Cult.*

In its first traceable historic form Christianity was simply a phase of Judaism, being the creed of a small number of Jews and Jewish proselytes who believed that the long-desired Messiah had come in the person of one Jesus, who had been so slain as to constitute an atoning sacrifice. Such believers were wont to meet at simple religious banquets, of a kind common in the Greco-Roman world, where they ate and drank in a semi-ceremonial way. A sacrificial banquet of this kind was one of the most universal features of ancient religion, being originally the typical tribal ceremony; and though among the Jews it had been to a remarkable extent superseded by sacrifices without communion, the usage was once as general with them as with the Gentiles. If grown rare in their life, the idea was abundantly preserved in their sacred books. The presumption is that such a banquet was connected with the Semitic God-name Jesus or Joshua before the Christian era; otherwise we must conclude that a sect of Jesuists, starting from the bare belief in the sacrificial death, adopted arbitrarily a kind of rite which was identified with the heathen worships of the surrounding Gentiles, and adopted also the Gentile sun-worshippers' practice of assembling by night. Paul's Corinthian converts are described as frequenting indifferently the table of Jesus ("the Lord") and the table of "dæmons"—that is, of heathen Gods or demigods. As the less orthodox Jews had long dabbled in similar "mysteries," there is every probability that private "Holy Suppers" had been practised even in Jewry by some groups long before

the Christian period, whether or not in connection with the name of Jesus "the Saviour." The gospel phrase, "blood of the covenant," points to a standing usage, the original form of which was probably the mutual drinking of actual human blood by the parties to a solemn pledge. In the Hebrew system some such covenant was held to be set up between the Deity and the worshippers on the one hand, and among the latter themselves on the other, when a sacrifice was partaken of. But it is further probable that the idea of a mystical partaking of an atoning or inspiring "body and blood" was of old standing in the same kind of connection. Such a practice was certainly part of the great Asiatic cults of Dionysos and Mithra; and as the ancient idea of a sacrificial banquet in honour of a God usually was that in some sense the worshipped power was either eaten, or present as partaker, it is more than likely that any banquets in connection with the Syrian worships of Adonis and (or) Marnas (each name = "the Lord") carried with them the same significance. In early Christian usage the ministrant of the eucharist spoke in the person of the founder, using the formulas preserved in the gospels; and as the priest in the cult of Attis also personated the God, there is a strong presumption that the same thing had been done in Jewry in the pre-Christian period, by way of modifying a still older usage in which a deified victim was actually slain and eaten.

For such an ancient Jesuine eucharist (revived, perhaps, as old mysteries were apt to be among the Jews, no less than among other ancient peoples, in times of national disaster) a new meaning *may* have been found in the story of an actually slain man Jesus, whose death took a sacrificial aspect from its

occurrence at the time of the atoning feast. In the earliest teaching, certainly, Jesus is not a God; he is merely the Jewish God's "holy servant." The eating of his symbolic body and blood, however, was on a par with the rituals in which Pagans mystically partook of *their* deities, and it thus lay in the nature of the eucharist that he should become divine if he were not so originally. The expression "Son of God," once of common application, would in his case come to have a special force, in terms of the ancient Semitic doctrine that the great God Kronos or Saturn or El had sacrificed his "only begotten Son." Abraham undertakes to do the same thing in the legend in Genesis; and Abraham and Isaac were presumptively ancient deities. On the other hand, the evolution of a fabulous hero from man to demi-god, and thence to a status among the highest Gods, is a common phenomenon in the ancient religions—Herakles and Dionysos being typical cases—and among the recognised Syrian worships there was already one of a *Theandrios* or God-man. Even for the Jews the name Jehovah was applicable to the Messiah. It lay, too, in the nature of the religious instinct that the man-like and man-loving God should gradually take the foremost place in a cult in which he was at first subordinate, as happened in the worships of Dionysos, Mithra, Herakles, and Krishna. Some such tendency is seen in the worship of demigods among the earlier Hebrews (Deut. xxxii. 17; *Heb.*).

It is not necessary to suppose that the Christian cult arose solely by way of a mystic sacrament. There may have been a blending of the usage of quasi-commemorative banquets, the simpler *Agapæ* or love-feasts of antiquity, with that of a special "mystery"; and in

the case of the latter there may have been many varieties, as there were later in the matter of liturgies. The humble Corinthian banquets appear to have combined the features of *Agapæ* and *Eucharistia*, and in the former aspect they were anything but solemn; some of the members sleeping, some drinking too much—a pathetic picture of the dim yearning for communion among a heavy-laden caste. But the nature of the eucharist proper, the claim to present an immortal "body and blood" for regenerative eating and drinking, involved a striving after sacrosanctity; and as soon as a regular ministrant was appointed by any group he would tend to develop into a priest of the Christist mysteries, magnifying his office.

The great feature of the Jewish Feast of the Passover being the eating of a lamb "before the Lord," that usage would in Jewish circles be preferred to, or at least combined with, the sacrament of bread and wine, "Ceres and Bacchus," which was perhaps commonest among the Gentiles. In the legend of Abraham and Melchisedek, priest of the Phœnician God El Elyon, there figures a sacramental meal of bread and wine (Gen. xiv. 18); and in the non-canonical book Ecclesiasticus there is a passage (l. 15) which suggests a use of wine as symbolical of blood. The "shew-bread," too, seems to have had a measure of sacramental significance. But while such a rite would seem to have flourished in the background of Judaism, that of the Passover was one of the great usages of the Jewish world; and the first Jesuists clearly held by it. It is indeed one of the hierological probabilities that the paschal lamb was anciently "Jeschu" or Jesus, the springtide symbol of a Sun-

God so named; for in the book of Revelation, which is markedly Judaic, "the Lamb" figures as the known symbol or mystic name of a Son of God "slain from the founding of the world," and identified with a mystic Jesus who is one with Jehovah—this long before the Christian cult in general had arrived at such a doctrine. There is a mythological presumption that such language had reference to the fact—dwelt on by later Jewish writers—that the date of the Passover fell at the entrance of the sun into the constellation Aries in the zodiac; and the rule that the paschal lamb must be roasted, not boiled, tells also of the sun myth. Yet again, the lamb is the animal latterly substituted in the myth of Abraham and Isaac for the sacrificed only-begotten son Isaac, whose name in the Hebrew (Yischak) comes near to the common form of the name Jesus (Yeschu), and who is mythologically identifiable as a Sun-God. In any case, "the Lamb slain for us" in the Apocalypse implies a recognised sacrament of lamb-eating, such as that of the Passover, which was anciently the time for sacrificing first-born sons (Ex. xxii. 29), and which is explained even in the priestly myth as a commemoration of the sparing of the first-born of Israel when the first-born of Egypt were divinely destroyed. To such a national precedent the Hebrew Jesuists would tend to cling as they did to the practice of circumcision.

But mere poverty on the one hand, and on the other the then common ascetic instinct (which in some cases put water for wine), would tell among Gentiles against the eating of actual flesh even when the pretence was to eat flesh and drink blood. In some early Christian groups accordingly the sacrificial food took the shape of a model of a lamb in bread (a kind

of device often resorted to in pagan worship with a special form of animal sacrifice), while others actually ate a lamb and drank its blood, as did some of the Mithraists and some of the Egyptian worshippers of Ammon. The Pauline phrase, "Our Passover also has been sacrificed, Christ"—which may or may not be an interpolation—would square with either practice; but that Jews who had been wont to make much of a paschal lamb, and who held Jesus to have represented that lamb, should pass at once to a sacred meal of simple bread and wine or water, is unlikely; and the gospels themselves indicate that a dish of another kind preceded the bread and wine formality in the traditional Supper.

Light is thrown on the original nature of the Jesuist rite by the Paschal controversy in which the Eastern and Western churches are found embroiled towards the end of the second century. It turned nominally on the different accounts of the crucifixion in the synoptics and the fourth gospel. Whereas the synoptics make Jesus take the Passover with his disciples in due course, and die on the cross on the first day (the Jewish day being reckoned from evening to evening), the fourth gospel makes him sup informally with his disciples on the day before the Passover, and die at the very hour of the paschal meal. The idea obviously is that implied in the Pauline phrase already quoted—that he is henceforth the substitute for the lamb; and in actual fact the Eastern Christians of the second century are found breaking their Easter fast on the Passover day, while the Westerns did not break it till the Sunday of the resurrection. Evidently the Eastern Christians had all along preserved an immemorial usage of eating their eucharist on the

Passover. They did not do this as orthodox Jews, for they called their meal one of "salvation" in a Christist sense, and their opponents did not charge them with Judaizing; but they argued that they must take the eucharist at the time at which Jesus took it with his disciples; while the Westerns contended that the time for rejoicing and commemoration was the day of resurrection. The explanation is that the story of Jesus eating with his disciples is a myth of the kind always framed to account for an ancient ritual practice; that the Jewish circumstances naturally gave the story a form which made Jesus obey a Judaic ordinance; and that the Westerns, coming newly into the cult, either recoiled from the procedure of a banquet on the very eve of the Lord's betrayal, or followed an Adonisian or Attisian usage, in which the original sacrificial banquet, though perhaps not abandoned, had been overshadowed by the "love feast" on the announcement that "the Lord has arisen."

In the nature of the case, the controversy was insoluble by argument. The Easterns had always taken the Holy Supper at the time of the Passover, and they had the gospel story telling them to repeat it "in remembrance" of the Lord who so supped at the Passover. The Westerns had the fourth gospel as their evidence that Jesus actually died at the time of the Passover, thus constituting a universal substitute for the Jewish sacrifice; and as in this gospel there is no use of bread and wine, but merely the nondescript meal which precedes the ritual in the synoptics, and in which the only symbolic act is the giving of a "sop" to the betrayer, they were left to practise the traditional eucharist in the way most conformable to their feelings or to their pre-Christian

usages. All theory was finally lost sight of in the historic church, with its daily celebration of the "mass," which is the annual sacrifice turned into a weekly and daily one; but from the whole discussion there emerges the fact that the sacrifice is the oldest element in the cult, antedating its biographical myths. And as the symbolic eating of bread and wine as "body and blood" in the pagan cults is a late refinement on a grosser practice of primitive sacrifice, so it was in the Christist. As the wafer in the Catholic ritual is the attenuated symbol of the bread of the mystic supper, so that bread was in turn an attenuated symbol of an earlier object.

When Christianity comes into aggressive competition with Paganism, one of the common charges of its Roman enemies is found to be that the Christians were wont to eat the body of an actual child in their mysteries. There is no good reason to believe that this horror ever happened among them; though the language of the rite tells of a pre-historic practice of human sacrifice and ritual cannibalism, such as actually took place among the early Semites and the pre-Christian Mexicans, and was said to have been in use among the Druids about the beginning of the Christian era; but it is probable that in some Christist groups there was a usage of eating a baked image of a child, as had been done in the Dionysian mysteries. The manipulation of the Abraham and Isaac legend, taken with other data in the Pentateuch and elsewhere, makes it clear that child-sacrifice had been practised among the early Hebrews as among the Phœnicians, and that the sacrifice of a lamb or kid became the equivalent, as it was perhaps the prototype. When it was permitted to substitute a

dough image for the actual lamb, the mystical principle could be further served by a dough image of the child that the lamb itself typified. Under the veil of secrecy, which was as much a matter of course with the early Christians as with the Pagan initiates of the Eleusinian and other mysteries, such variations of the cult were possible to an indefinite extent. It was only when there grew up an ecclesiastical organisation, in the spirit and on the scale of the imperial system itself, and when the compiled gospels had become a recognised code for the Church in general, that they were reduced to the norm of the pagan sacrament of bread and wine.

The only other primary Christian rite, that of baptism, is shown even in the gospels to have been pre-Christian; and the anti-Judaic John the Baptist may have been a historic figure among the Jews, though his connection with the Christos is a myth, seen in the gospels in different stages of its development. The presumption is that it was framed at the stage at which the Jewish Christists, faced by the Pauline and Gentile opposition to circumcision, hitherto held binding among the Jesuists, decided to substitute baptism (which already had a Jewish vogue) and thereby maintain a Jewish primacy. But baptism too was a common Gentile usage, as was the use of holy water, later adopted by the Christian Church.

With these Christist rites, it is clear, there was originally associated a fixed belief in the speedily-approaching end of the world, that being the notion which most completely pervades every book in the New Testament. The rites then, like the similar mysteries of the Pagans, were regarded as the way of entrance into the future life, whether that were

conceived as the apparition of a supernatural new Jerusalem on earth, or as a transformed existence in a material heaven in the skies. For the Pauline period, the approaching catastrophe was evidently the supreme pre-occupation; and to the fear of it the whole of the early Christian propaganda appealed. There is no reason, however, to believe that the Christians at Jerusalem ever "had all things in common," as is asserted in the Acts of the Apostles, where other passages confute the claim. Such communities indeed had frequently arisen in antiquity, and there was a kindred tradition that Pythagoras had centuries before, in Italy, converted by one discourse a multitude of hearers, who adopted a communal life. But the narrative in the Acts, especially as regards the fable of Ananias and Sapphira, seems to have been framed in the interest of some of the Christian communist groups which arose long after the period in question, and whose promoters needed at once an apostolic precedent for their ideal and a menace against those who temporised with it. In the Pauline epistles the Gentile converts, so far from cultivating community of goods, are seen going to law with each other before heathen judges.

It is probable that the use of the sign of the cross, as a mark of membership and a symbol of salvation, belonged to the earliest stages of the cult; at least the sign in question figures as the mark of a body of religious enthusiasts in Jewry as early as the Book of Ezekiel (ix. 4; *Heb.*); and in the Apocalypse (vii. 2, 3) the "seal of the living God" appears to have been understood in the same sense as the sign prescribed by the prophet. The Hebrew letter *tau*, there specified, is known to have represented at

different periods different forms of cross; and the oldest of all is believed to have been the *crux ansata* of the Egyptians, which was a hieroglyph of immortal life. Thus the historic form of the crucifix was determined, not by the actual manner of normal crucifixion (for in that the arms were drawn above the head and not outspread), but by previous symbolism. In the Egyptian ritual of Osiris a spreading of the arms on the cross was in remote antiquity a form of mystic regeneration; and in some amulets the *stauros* or tree-cross of Osiris is found represented with human arms.

§ 6. *Rise of Gentile Christism.*

A severance between the Jewish and the Gentile Christists was the necessary condition of any wide spread of the cult. Though it was the success of Jewish proselytism that paved the way for the propaganda of Christism, only a minority of Gentiles would willingly bow to the Jewish pretension of holding all the sources of "salvation." That a Grecised Jew, as Paul is represented to have been, should begin to make the cult cosmopolitan, in despite of opposition from Jerusalem, is likely enough; and continued opposition would only deepen the breach. The Judaic claim involved a financial interest; and as local economic interest was a factor in the development of every Gentile group of Christists, a theological argument for Gentile independence was sure to be evolved. As the composition of the Christ-myth proceeded, accordingly, various episodes to the discredit of the mythic twelve disciples of Jesus are framed: "one of the twelve" figures as the betrayer;

Peter openly denies his Master, and the others forsake him in a body in the hour of trial; while their incapacity to understand him in life is often insisted on. John the Baptist and Jesus, again, are made explicitly to teach that the "Kingdom of God" is taken away from the Jews, though Jesus also promises the twelve that they shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes. Finally, there is a manipulation of narratives on the question of the responsibility for Jesus' execution, the outcome being that it lies neither with the Roman governor nor with the sub-Roman king, but with the Jewish priests and people. In all likelihood most of those episodes were first set forth in a Gentile Passion-play, whence they passed into the common stream of tradition; but such an item as the part played by Pilate is likely to have been first introduced from the Jewish side, Pilate having been an object of special Jewish detestation.

In such matters the literary or myth-making faculty of the Gentiles, with their many Saviour-Gods, gave them the advantage over the Judaists; but the strife of the two interests was long and bitter. It flames out in the Judaic book of Revelation, in the allusion to those who "say they are apostles and are not"; and long after the time allotted to Paul we find him caricatured in certain Judaising writings, the so-called Clementine *Recognitions* and *Homilies*, in the person of Simon Magus, an entirely unhistorical personage, who also appears in the Acts of the Apostles. Simon Magus is, in fact, a mythical figure evolved from Semo Megas or Great Sem (= Sem-on, as Samson is Samas-on), an old Semitic Sun-God worshipped by the polytheists of Samaria, and in connection with whose cultus there was evidently

a Gentile Christist movement, of a Gnostic or mythical character, its Christ being conceived as non-human. Such a movement being competitive with that of the Jewish Jesus, "Simon," to whom was ascribed an impressive Gnostic treatise, became the type of anti-Jewish heresy; whence the late Christian story in the Acts, where Elymas again (= Great El) is a mythical duplication of Simon.

There are many signs that Samaritan elements entered early into the Christist movement. The fourth gospel even represents the founder to have been accepted in Samaria as the Messiah; and in so far as the cult became Gentilised, even if the Ebionites did not stand for an ancient local and quasi-Samaritan foundation, Samaritans would be the more ready to join it, since they were thereby helping to discomfit the more exclusive Jews. But they too had their Christ-myth; and the conception of the Holy Spirit as a dove came from them to the Christians. Seeking to found finally on the Old Testament, the scripture-makers of the latter movement had to explain away their Samaritan antecedents by myths of heresy.

The book of Acts as a whole, however, stands for an ecclesiastical tendency in the second century to make out that the first apostles had not been divided; that Peter too was a preacher of Gentile Christism, to which he had been converted by a vision; and that Paul, in turn, had made concessions to Judaism. When the Judaic Church became less and less dangerous as a possible monopolist, the organising Gentile churches could thus proceed to construct a theoretic connection between Christianity and Judaism, the "new dispensation" and the old, thus preserving for the new creed the prestige of the Old

Testament, with which, as a body of sacred books, the New could not for a long time compete, even in the eyes of its devotees. At the same time the apostles, who had long figured as church-founders, were effectively glorified as wonder-workers, being credited with miracles which rivalled those of the Christos himself; and Peter raises a "Tabitha" from the dead as Jesus had done the "Talitha" or maiden in the gospels—a myth which was itself a duplicate of a traditional pagan miracle later credited to Apollonius of Tyana.

Alongside, however, of the systematising or centripetal process there went on a centrifugal one, the process of innovating Gentile heresy. Already in Paul's epistles we read of "another Jesus" whom the apostle "had not preached"; and in the second century a dozen "Gnostic" heresies were honeycombing the movement. Their basis or inspiration was the mystic claim to inner light, "gnosis" or knowledge, disparaged in the Pauline phrase about "knowledge [or science] falsely so-called." It was in nearly all cases a combination of ideas current in the theosophies of Asia and Egypt with the God-names of the Judaic and Christian cults. So powerful was the instinct of independence, then as in later periods of political change, that the spirit of Gnosticism, in a Judaic form, found its way into the expanding gospels, where Jesus is at times made to pose as the holder of a mystical knowledge, denied to the capacities of the multitude, but conveyed by him to his disciples; who, however, are in other passages reduced to the popular level of spiritual incapacity. It cannot be doubted that the ferment thus promoted by what the systematisers denounced as heresy helped

at first to spread the cult, at least in name, since all Christists alike would tend to resort to the eucharist, or to the assemblies which were to develop into Churches.

At first the Jewish Christists may well have shared in the ordinary Jewish detestation of the Roman tyranny; and for them Nero may have been "antichrist," as he appears to be in the Apocalypse; but there is no good reason to suppose that in Nero's day the Christians in Rome were a perceptible quantity. Martyr-making later became an ecclesiastical industry; and the striking passage in Tacitus which alleges the torture and destruction of a "vast multitude" of Christians at Nero's hands is nowhere cited in Christian literature till after the printing, under suspicious circumstances, of the *Annals*. No hint of such a catastrophe is given in the Acts of the Apostles. An equivalent statement to that of Tacitus is first found in the chronicle of Sulpicius Severus in the fifth century, where it is an expanded episode in the midst of an extremely curt epitome. The similarly suspicious passage on the same subject in Suetonius is put in further perplexity by the same writer's statement that in the reign of Claudius the Jews in Rome were constantly rioting, "Chrestus stirring them up"—an expression which suggests, if anything, that there was on foot in Rome a common Jewish movement of Messianic aspiration, in which the Christ was simply expected as a deliverer, apart from any such special cult as that of Jesus. It is quite inapplicable to any such movement as is set forth in the Pauline Epistles. In any case, after the fall of Jerusalem Jesuist hopes were visibly confined to the religious sphere; and Gentile Christianity above all was perforce resigned to

the imperial system, of which it was one day to become a limb.

There is seen, too, even on the face of the Pauline epistles, a superimposing of new Greek terms and concepts on the vocabulary of Jewish theology, terms of metaphysic and religion such as *immortality*, *conscience*, *providence*, *natural*, *corruptible*, *invisible*—and in the language of the gospels and the Acts the Grecising influence becomes more and more marked, increasing in the Acts and in the third gospel, and becoming paramount in the fourth. The very conception of religious as distinct from temporal salvation is Hellenistic or Persian rather than Judaic; and the title of Saviour, which becomes the special epithet of the Christ, is constituted as much by Pagan usage as by the original significance of the name Jesus. Gentile also, rather than Judaic—though common to the pre-Judaic Semites and the idolators among the Hebrews—was the idea expressed in the Pauline epistles that the Christist who partakes of the mystic rite *suffers with* and henceforth is one with the slain demigod, being "crucified with Christ." That conception is precedented generally in all the cults of ritual mourning, and particularly in that of Attis, in which the worshippers gashed themselves and punctured their hands or necks; some of the priests even mutilating themselves as the God was mutilated in the myth. The Pauline expression is to be understood in the light of the passage in which a bitter censure, for having taken up a false Christism, is passed on the Galatians, "before whose eyes Christ had been openly depicted, crucified" (cp. 1 Cor. xi. 26, Gr. and A.V.). In some but not in all MSS. are added the words "among you," words which may either have been omitted by

late transcribers whom they embarrassed, or added by some one desirous of accentuating the already emphatic expression of the original. When we connect with these the further passage, usually taken also without inquiry as purely metaphorical, in which Paul says he "bears branded on his body the marks of Jesus," we find reason to surmise that, even as the ministrant in the Dionysian college was called by the God's name, Bacchus; as the Osirian worshipper spread himself on the cross and became one with Osiris; and as the priest of Attis personated Attis in his mysteries, so Paul or another personated Jesus in the mysteries of his sect; that what has so long passed for verbal metaphor stood originally for a process of acted symbolism; and that the theory of the mystery was that he who personated the crucified demigod became specially assimilated to him. The Pauline language on this head coincides exactly with the general and primordial theory of theanthropic sacrifice: "I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me." Obscure and violent if understood as sheer metaphor, such expressions fall into line with much ancient religious belief when read as describing a symbolic rite.

In any case, the first-cited passage seems to tell of a dramatic or an artistic representation of the crucified Christ in connection with the sacrament; a procedure which would probably not be favoured by the art-hating Jews, but which, gradually developed among the Gentiles in the fashion of the drama-loving Greeks, is the probable origin of many of the gospel narratives. It belonged to the conception of all such mysteries that their details should never be divulged

to outsiders; hence the rarity of such allusions, even in letters to the faithful. The Christian cult adopted the very terms of the heathen practice, and its initiates were called *mystæ*, like those of all the rival religions.

A study of the early Christian tombs shows how much of more or less unconscious compromise took place wherever Christism made converts. The charming myth of Psyche had become for Pagans a doctrine of immortality; and in that sense the figure of the child-goddess was without misgiving carved on early Christian tombs. So with the figure of Hermes Kriophoros, Hermes the Ram-Bearer, who is the true original of the Christian conception of the Good Shepherd, in art and in thought, though a figure of Apollo in the same capacity may have been the medium of conveyance. Orpheus was assimilated in the same fashion; and when art began to be applied to the needs of the new cult, Jesus was commonly figured as a beardless youth, like the popular deities of the Pagans in general.

Last but not least of the Gentile elements which determined the spread of the Christist cult was the double meaning attaching to the Greek form of the Messianic name. In the unplausible passage above cited from Suetonius, that is spelt Chrestos, evidently after the Greek word *Chrēstos* = "good, excellent, gracious," which occurs frequently in the New Testament, and which was a special title of the "infernal" or underworld Gods of the Samothracian mysteries, also of Hermes, of Osiris, and of Isis. The two words were pronounced alike; and the coincidence is often such as would be made much of by ancient thinkers, wont to lay great stress on words. In the gospel

phrase so loosely rendered "my yoke is easy" the Greek adjective is *chrēstos;* in the epistles *chrēstotes* is the word used in the phrase "the goodness of God"; and in the familiar Pauline quotation from Menander "good manners" is in the Greek *chrēsta ēthē.* Among the Pagans, again, this epithet constantly figured on the kind of tomb called *herōon*, erected to distinguished persons who thus received the status of inferior deities or demigods, and who in consequence of this very epigraphic formula came in later times to be regarded as Christian martyrs, and to be so celebrated in festivals which were really continuations of the pagan feasts in their honour. The Christians themselves, on the other hand, habitually wrote their founder's name *Chrestos* or *Chreistos* on their tombs in the second and third centuries, thus assimilating it to the pagan epigraphic formula *chrēste chaire;* and the term Christian frequently followed the same spelling. Several of the Fathers, indeed, make play with the double spelling, claiming that the terms are for them correlative. So fixed was the double usage that to this day the spelling of the French word *chrétien* preserves the trace. There was thus on the Christist side an appeal to Gentiles on the lines of a name or badge already much associated with Gentile religion, and attractive to them in a way in which the name "Christ" as signifying "one anointed" would not be.

How far this attraction operated may be partly inferred from such a document as the apologetic treatise of Theophilus of Antioch, conjecturally dated about the year 180, in which there is not a single mention of Jesus as a basis of the Christian creed, while the names Christos and Christian are repeatedly

bracketed with "chrēstos." The writer figures less as a Pauline Christist than as a Gentile proselyte who founded on the Hebrew sacred books, and believed in some impersonal Christ at once "good" and "anointed." Similarly in the apology of Athenagoras, belonging to the same period, the founder figures purely as the divine *Logos*, not being even mentioned as a person with a biography, though the writer quotes the Logos through an apocryphal gospel. In such a propaganda the Greek associations with the epithet Chrēstos would count for much more than those of the Judaic standpoint.

But above all other gains on this score may be reckoned those made in Egypt, where the cult of the cross belonged alike to the ancient worship of Osiris and the recent one of Serapis. Not only was Osiris in especial *chrēstos*, the benign God, but the hieroglyph of goodness, applied to him in common with others, had the form of a cross standing on a hillock, while the cross symbol in another form was the sign of immortal life. In the imported worship of Serapis, which inevitably conformed in the main to that of Osiris, the cross was equally a divine and mystic emblem. It thus becomes intelligible that some devotees of Serapis should, as is stated in the well-known letter of the Emperor Hadrian, figure as bishops of Christ; and that Serapis-worshippers should rank as Christians, their God being like Osiris "Chrēstos." To gather into one loosely-coherent mass the elements so variously collected was the work of the gradually-developed hierarchical organisation; and the process involved a retention of some of the characteristics of the various worships concerned.

That there were yet other sources of membership

for the early Church, apart from direct conversion, is to be gathered from the allegorical writing known as the "Pastor" of Hermas, which is known to have been one of the most popular books in the whole Christian literature of the second century. This work, apparently written in Italy, never once mentions the name Jesus or the name Christ, and never quotes from any book in either Testament, nor alludes to a crucifixion or a eucharist; but speaks of One God, a Holy Spirit, and a Son of God who underwent labours and sufferings; of a "Church" which appears to mean the community of all good men; and of bishops and apostles and presbyters. It is intelligible only as standing for some species of pre-Jesuist propaganda very loosely related to Judaism, inasmuch as it appears to cite some apocryphal Jewish work, yet utters no Judaic doctrine. Its sole specified rite is baptism; and its moral teaching barely recognises the idea of vicarious sacrifice. Such a work must have had its public before the Jesuist movement took sectarian or dogmatic form; and its popularity in the early Church must have come of the inclusion of its earlier following. When the Church attained definite organisation and a dogmatic system the book was naturally discarded as having none of the specific qualities of a Christian document.

A "Church" such as is ambiguously set forth in the *Pastor* may conceivably have been set up by one of the movements of Samaritan Christism already mentioned, or by that connected with the name of the Jew Elxai, who is recorded to have written of "Christ" without making it clear whether he referred to the gospel Jesus. As among the Elcesaites, so in the *Pastor*, Jesus is conceived as of gigantic

stature. On any view, being neither Christian nor anti-Christian, but simply pre-Christian, yet turned to Christian uses, the book strengthens the surmise that a number of the so-called heresies of the early Church were in reality survivals of earlier movements which the Church had absorbed, perhaps during times of persecution. The "heresy" of Simon Magus was certainly such a pre-Christian cult; that of Dositheus appears to be in the same case; and the ideas of the *Pastor* conform to no canonical version of the Christian creed.

§ 7. *Growth of the Christ Myth.*

The Christist cult gained ground not because there was anything new either in its dogma or in its promise, but on the contrary because these were so closely paralleled in many Pagan cults: its growth was in fact by way of assimilation of new details from these. Step by step it is seen to have adopted the mysteries, the miracles, and the myths of the popular Gentile religions. The resurrection of Jesus is made to take place like that of Mithra, from a rock tomb; and to the sacred banquet of twelve represented by the last supper there is added, in the fourth gospel, an episode which embodies the common pagan usage of a sacred banquet of seven. In the way of miracle the Christ is made to turn water into wine, as Dionysos had been immemorially held to do; he walks on the water like Poseidon; like Osiris and Phœbus Apollo he wields the scourge; like the solar Dionysos, he rides on two asses and feeds multitudes in the desert; like Æsculapius, he raises men from

the dead, gives sight to the blind, and heals the sick; and like Attis and Adonis he is mourned over and rejoiced over by women. Where the parallel is not exact we still find pagan myth giving rise to Christian; for the fable of the temptation is but a new story told of the oft-copied ancient Babylonian astronomical symbol in which the Goat-God (the sign of Capricorn) stands beside the Sun-God—a scene turned by the Greeks into the myths of Pan leading Jupiter to the mountain-top, of Pan or Marsyas competing with Apollo, and of Silenus instructing Dionysos. Above all, the Christ had to be born in the manner of the ever-cherished Child-God of the ancient world; he must have a virgin for mother, and he must be pictured in swaddling-clothes in the basket-manger, preserved from immemorial antiquity in the myth of Ion and in the cult of Dionysos, in which the image of the Child-God was carried in procession on Christmas day. Like Horos he must be born in a stable—the stable-temple of the sacred cow, the symbol of the Virgin Goddess Isis, queen of heaven; and the apocryphal gospels completed the pagan parallel by making the stable a cave, the birthplace of Zeus and Mithra and Dionysos and Adonis and Hermes and Horos. Prudence excluded the last detail from the canonical gospels, but it became part of the popular faith; and the Christ's birthday had been naïvely assimilated by the populace to the solstitial birth-day of the Sun-God, 25th December, long before the Church ventured to endorse the usage.

Judaic manipulation, however, was not lacking. Though Jesus is born of a virgin, it is in the manner of Jewish theosophy; for the "Spirit of God" broods over Mary as it had done on the germinal deep in

Genesis. Having been a Jewish Messiah before he was a Gentile or Samaritan Christ, Jesus had further to satisfy as many as possible of the Jewish Messianic requirements. He must be of the line of David, and born at Bethlehem; but inasmuch as Jewish tradition expected both a Messiah Ben-David and a Messiah Ben-Joseph—the latter being apparently a Samaritan requirement—he was made Ben-David by royal descent, and Ben-Joseph through his putative father. Yet again, there being Messianists who denied the necessity that the Anointed One should descend from David, there was inserted in the gospels a story in which Jesus repudiates such descent; the two opposed theories being thus alike harboured, without discomfort and without explanation. In the same fashion the ascetics of the movement made the Son of Man poor and homeless, while the anti-ascetics made him a wine-drinker, ready to sit at meat with publicans and sinners. For the Jews, too, he had to raise the widow's son as did Elijah and Elisha in the Old Testament story—a Hebrew variant of the Gentile myth of the raising of the dead Attis or Adonis, or the dead child Horos or Dionysos, further reproduced in the resurrection of the Christ himself; and there had to be at his birth a massacre of the innocents, as in the myth of Moses and in the Arab myths of the births of Abraham and Daniel. Yet again, he had to figure in his crucifixion as bearing the insignia of royalty, like the sacrificed "only begotten son" of the Semitic God El, and the sacrificed God-man of the Babylonian feast of Sacæa. It may be that Barabbas, "the son of the father," is a survival of the same conception and the same ritual usage, similarly imposed on a narrative of which no part is historical.

As with action, so with theory. In the East there had long prevailed the mystical dogma that the Supreme God, who was above knowledge, had incarnated himself in or created a deity representing his mind in relation to men, the *Logos* or Word, in the sense of message or revealed reason. Such was Mithra, the Mediator, in the Mazdean system, whence apparently the conception originated; such was Thoth in the theosophy of Egypt; such was Hermes, son of Maia and messenger of the Gods, in the pantheon of the Greeks; and the Jews had long been assimilating the principle, partly by making the deity figure as the *Logos* in human or angelic form (as in Gen. xv.); partly in the form of a personalising of *Sophia*, wisdom, as in the books of Ecclesiastes and Proverbs and in the Old Testament apocrypha; partly in the later form of a theoretic doctrine of the *Logos*, as developed on the basis of Plato in the writings of Philo the Jew of Alexandria, about the beginning of the Christian era. In the fourth gospel this doctrine is summarily imposed on the Christist cult in an advanced form, though the three synoptic gospels had shown no trace of it. The new myth was welcomed like the others; all alike went to frame a deity who could compare and compete with those of the other cults of the day.

Doctrine followed the same law of assimilation; the Christ must needs reflect in his teaching all the phases of the religious thought of the age, however contradictory. First he had to voice the Judaic hope of a kingdom of heaven, with stress laid on the claims of the poor; he must insist on the speedy coming of the Judaic doomsday and on his own function at the catastrophe; but yet again he is made

to present the kingdom of heaven as a kind of spiritual change; and last of all he is made to utter the wisdom of the thinker who had penetrated all the popular delusions and seen that "the kingdom of heaven is within you"—or nowhere. In one gospel he excludes Samaritans and Gentiles from his mission; in another he makes a Samaritan the model "neighbour"; in another he goes among the Samaritans in person. He becomes as manifold in doctrine as is Apollo or Dionysos in function. Even when he is made to lay down, as against Jewish superstition, the sane principle that victims of fatalities are not to be reckoned worse sinners than other men, a later hand appends a tag which reaffirms the very superstition impugned. Every variety of ethic, within the limits of the Jewish and Gentile ideals of the time, is imposed on him in turn. Alternately particularist and universalist, a bigoted Jew and a cosmopolitan, a lover of the people and a Gnostic despiser of their ignorance, a pleader for love to enemies and a bitter denouncer of opponents; successively insisting on unlimited forgiveness and on the ostracism of recalcitrant brethren, on the utter fulfilment of the Mosaic law and on its supersession; alternately promising and denying temporal blessings, avowing and concealing his belief in his Messiahship; prescribing by turns secresy and publicity to his auditors, blind faith and simple good works to his disciples—he is the heterogeneous product of a hundred mutally frustrative hands, a medley of voices that never was and could not be in one personality. Through his supernatural mask there speak the warring sects and ideals of three centuries: wisdom and delusion, lenity and bitterness, ventriloquise in

turns in his name. Even as the many generations of Jewish teachers had preluded all their changing counsels with a "thus saith the Lord," so did their Christist successors seek to mint their cherished dogmas, their rigid prejudices, and their better inspirations, with the image and superscription of the new Logos, the growing God of a transforming world. The later product is thus as unreal as the older.

It is only on presuppositions themselves the fruit of belief in the myth that such a growth seems unlikely or impossible, or that something supernormal is needed to account for the wide development of the Christian system. Those who look upon the historic flood in the broad and peopled plain are slow to conceive that it had its rise in the minute rills and random brooks of a far-off mountain land. But it is so that the great rivers begin.

CHAPTER II.

THE ENVIRONMENT.

THE artificial organism which we have seen beginning to take shape is to be conceived, like those properly so called, as depending on and adjusting itself to its environment. Of this the nature has been partly set forth in tracing the beginnings of the cult, but it must be considered in itself if the relation is to be fully understood.

§ 1. *Social and Mental Conditions in the Roman Empire.*

The world in which Christianity grew up was above all things one of extinguished nationalities, of obliterated democracies, of decaying intellectual energy. Wherever the Roman Empire spread, a rigid limit was set to the play of public spirit, whether as criticism of the political order or as effort to improve the social structure. The forms of municipal government remained; but the natural and progressive struggle of classes and interests was at an end. The Jew must give up his polity of applied theocracy; the Greek his ideal of the City State; even as the Roman Senate itself shrank into an assembly of sycophants, content to register its master's decrees. All alike, on pain of extinction, must mutely or fawningly accept the imperial system, and abandon hope of shaping

their own political destinies. In such a world the thinking faculty, denied almost all exercise on the living problems of polity and conduct, necessarily turned to the themes that were open to it; and as the very calibre of men's minds had narrowed with the suppression of their freedom, which meant the curtailment of their personality, there was no such faculty available as could grasp the difficult problems of science and philosophy led up to by the hardy speculation of the ages of freedom and by the skilled specialism of the endowed students of pre-Roman Alexandria. For the mass of the people, above all, save where the Greek drama was still presented to them, concrete religion was the one possible form of mental life; and for the more serious such mental life was at once a solace and a preoccupation. Under a despotism which in so many ways conformed to oriental types, serious men developed something of the oriental aloofness from the actual: from action they turned to brooding, from seen interests to the problems of the unseen. Even in Rome itself, where the upper classes were much more indifferent to Christism than those of the Eastern provinces, the new conditions developed a new interest in theological problems on the pagan side.

Broadly speaking, types and classes of men have always been meditatively religious or reflective in the degree of their exclusion from practical concerns. In the ancient world the law reveals itself at every vista. At one extreme stood the energetic Romans, sedulous first in agriculture and later in warfare; superstitious but unspeculative; making ritual religion a methodical province of polity, a part of the mechanism of the republic: at the other the Hindus, predestined to

despotism by their physical and economic conditions, and to inaction by their climate, the true children of reverie, for whom religious evolution was a deepening absorption in boundless speculation. Midway stood the Greeks, active but not laborious, too alive for much brooding and too cultured for wholly pedantic superstition, the natural framers of a religion of poetry and art. Their science and philosophy began in Asia Minor, on the soil of the half-scientific, half-religious lore of the overthrown Assyrian and Babylonian cultures of the past, in a leisurely and half-oriental atmosphere; and after the first free evolution of its germs in the manifold life of their countless competitive City States, the most notable growth of their philosophy was in the period when their political failure began to declare itself, and the shadow of despotism was falling on men sobered and chagrined by the spectacle of ceaseless intestine strife. When despotism became permanent, thought still progressed in virtue of the acquired stores of culture and stress of impulse; but in that air the higher life soon flagged, and philosophy lapsed to the levels of ancient mysticism, becoming a play of fantasy instead of an effort of critical reason.

Where the cultured few underwent such a destiny, the uncultured crowd could but feed on the simpler religious doctrine that came in their way. It necessarily ran to a more intimate employment of the standing machinery of the creeds, to a use of the more emotional rites, to a freer participation in the consolations and excitements of the dramatic mysteries. Where civic life was precarious without being self-ruling, the more serious came more and more under the sway of the oriental preoccupation over the future

—a habit of mind developed in lands subject to chronic conquest and to the caprice of tyrants and satraps. Growing Greece, while free, had taken from the East, centuries before the Christian era, stimulating and emotional cults, especially dear to women, with mysteries which promised to their initiates a blessed life beyond the troublous present; and by a natural tendency those who had least share in controlling the present clung most to such comfort. So, in republican Rome, it was found that the women and the imported slaves were always most hospitable to a new "superstition"; and in times of dangerous war the proclivity quickened.

In this way there went on a kind of religious enfranchisement in the Mediterranean world both before and after the Romans became the universal masters. In the early City States of Greece and Italy, but especially in Rome, worship was originally in large measure a privilege of rank. The most constant and intimate worship was naturally that of the household Gods, the *Lares* and *Penates*; and the men with no ancestral home, whether slaves or paupers, were outside of such communion. Only in the worship of the Gods of the city was there general communion; and even here the patrician orders long monopolised the offices of ministry in Rome; while even in more democratic Greece, with some exceptions, the slaves and the foreign residents were excluded from the sacred banquet which was the mark of all cults alike, public or private. Even the first imported cults were put under a civic control, which doubtless promoted decorum, but also made for class interests. In later republican Rome the usage prevailed of bringing to the sacred banquet-table the

statues of the Gods, who were believed to partake with the worshippers; and the company was naturally kept very select. For the Roman common people, accordingly, religious association was mainly confined to the worship of the public *Lares* and *Penates* instituted for their benefit. In Greece the city banquet was liberalised with the progress of democracy; but at best it was the heritage of the free citizens; and the antique simplicity of its rites must have made it lack emotional atmosphere. At times it was even necessary to practise compulsion to secure the due attendance of "parasites" at the smaller sacramental repasts held daily in the temples, which would lack the attraction of the public feasts.

Thus it came about that in the course of the ages the common people, especially the many aliens from Asia Minor, slave and free, everywhere tended to seek more and more a religion for themselves—something in which they could share equally and intimately; somewhat as, in a later period, the common people in so many parts of Europe recoiled from official Catholicism before as well as at the Reformation, or as the townspeople in England later set up their own dissenting chapels in dislike of the Established Church. As early as the Peloponnesian war we find new religious societies arising among the humbler Athenians, making accessible to them Dionysian or other eastern mysteries of sacred baptism, and a sacred banquet of "body and blood," in which a kid was the victim. Some such banquet was the normal basis; and the societies, which were numerous, were self-supporting and self-governing, appointing their own priests or priestesses, and keeping their own sacred books. In these cults slaves, aliens, and

women were alike admitted; and, though in some the worship was orgiastic, in keeping with the then common level of popular culture, it is not to be supposed that the avowed ideals of "goodness, chastity, piety," were for such groups in general devoid of moral significance. They were condemned by the educated classes alike in republican Greece and in republican Rome as vulgar and licentious; but if these imputations are to be fully believed as against the pagan societies, they must be equally believed as against the Christians, concerning whom, in turn, they were generally made in the second and third centuries. Of neither movement, probably, were they more than partially true. In any case, the Greek societies gave a model to the early Christian churches in more than one point of organisation, most of them having had "presbyters" and a "bishop" (*episcopos*), and some being called "synagogues," a term synonymous with *ecclesia*. So great, finally, became the competitive pressure of the private cults that those of the State had to offer inducements as against them; and in course of time the once exclusive Eleusinian mysteries of Athens were opened to all members of the State, and latterly—save in exceptional cases, such as those of avowed unbelievers, or Epicureans, or Christians—to all members of the Roman empire; even the slaves, finally, being initiated at the public expense.

So far as the gospels can be taken to throw light on Christian beginnings, the cult grew up under conditions similar to those above described. Some of "the poor" in Jewry as elsewhere felt themselves in a manner outside the established worship; and, though declamation against the rich had long been popular, the names given to the legendary disciples

suggest that there too the new cults were in large measure promoted by aliens. The accounts of the founder as mixing much with "publicans and sinners" tell of the presence of such in the sect; and there too the constant presence of women stood for a sense either of feminine dissatisfaction with the bareness of the official worship, or of the need for a personal recognition which Judaism did not give to the subordinate sex. It does not appear that slaves were similarly welcomed in the Jewish stage of the movement; portions of the gospels even make Jesus appeal to the ideals of the slave-owner; and nowhere is the slave himself sympathetically brought to the front. But it is clear that when the cult entered on a Gentile development it admitted slaves like the religious societies of the Greeks; and in the first Gentile period the members appear to have paid their way and managed their own affairs in the democratic Greek fashion.

The determining political condition everywhere was the social sway of the empire, keeping all men impotent in the higher public affairs. Exclusion from public life, broadly speaking, had been the cause of the special addiction of the women, the slaves, and the unenfranchised foreigners of the Greek cities and of Rome to private cults and communions. Under the empire, all the lay classes alike were excluded from public power; and new interests must be found to take the place of the old. Within the pale of the Roman "peace," those interests were summed up for the majority in athletics, the theatre, and the circus on the one hand; and on the other in the field of religious practices. Hopes of betterment, and despair after vain revolt, were alike fuel for the religious spirit;

since the hope turned to vaticination, and the despair crept for shelter to the mysteries that promised a better life beyond the grave. But the prevailing lot of men had become one of unwarlike submission; the material refinements of civilisation had bred in the cities a new sensitiveness, indeed a new neurosis; vice itself set up reactions of asceticism; and over all there brooded the pessimism of the prostrate East, the mood of men downcast, consciously the puppets of an uncontrollable earthly destiny, and wistful for a higher vision and rule.

§ 2. *Jewish Orthodoxy.*

Between the new sect and the normal or established Jewish religion, which had contained within it or was easily adaptable to every element that went to make early Jesuism, the force of separation was not doctrinal or intellectual, but political and economic. Save for the later-evolved concept of an Incarnation—which also, however, was foreshadowed in Jewish thought—there is almost no principle in the Christian system that was not to be found either in the sacred books or in the current rabbinical teaching of the Jews, whose development is to be measured no less by the liberal ethical teaching of such rabbis as Hillel than by the mere traditionalism ascribed to the mass of the scribes and Pharisees. Their sacred books spoke sympathetically of the poor; and their sacred treasury must have fed many, although—as in the days of the prophets and in our own time in Europe—there were some irreconcilables. Even among the Pharisees there were some who proclaimed the "law of the heart" as the highest. As regarded religious

thought, the Jews' system of sacrifice on the one hand, and their higher or supra-ecclesiastical ethic on the other, provided for all the forms of bias appealed to in the gospels and epistles, with the one exception of the kind of sentiment which sought a demigod rather than a God; a humanly sympathetic divinity, acquainted with griefs, rather than a remote and awful Omnipotence. Even this figure was partly evolved on Jewish lines, in the conception of a Messiah who should suffer and die. But a Messiah who died and did not soon come again in triumph had no tenable place in the Jewish system; and when the cult of such a Messiah came into Gentile vogue, especially after the ruin of Jerusalem, it was necessitated either to take a new and substantive status outside of Jewry or disappear altogether. It is true that the so-called Nestorians (properly Nazaræans) of Armenia have reconciled Judaism with Christism by defining the sacrifice of Jesus as the final sin-offering, while maintaining the other sacrifices of the Mosaic law; but that course was impossible to the hierarchy accused of causing the crucifixion; and the Nestorians were as anti-Jewish as other Christians.

Judaism, so to speak, was riveted at once to its national and to its economic basis. Its primary appeals to Gentile proselytes were those of a great historic shrine and a body of sacred literature; and on both grounds the clerical class of Jerusalem claimed a revenue from the faithful, Hebrew or proselyte. Financial interest secured that the converted alien should be treated as the more liberal prophetic literature urged; but it was of the essence of Judaism that the temple or the Patriarchate should be the fiscal headquarters of all the faithful; and herein lay a

moral as well as a financial limit. Ordinary racial instinct, and ordinary Gentile self-interest, must tend to clash with such claims in the case of rabbinical Judea as in that of Papal Rome; and the merely moral or ideal character of the Judaic influence, coupled with the effect of the common Gentile disesteem for the Jewish personality, brought it about that the Romanism of Jewry, always more restricted, collapsed by far the more swiftly. The later collapse of Jewish Jesuism was a phenomenon of the same order.

Early Jesuism, it is clear, flourished as a new means of Jewish proselytism among the Gentiles; and the fact best established by the dubious literature which surrounds the "apostles" is that their Gentile converts were expected to contribute to headquarters, just as did the ordinary Jew. Even after a Gentile differentiation had definitely begun, whether under Paul or at the hands of others who forged in his name, it was Jewish forces that did the work so far as literature went. Throughout the synoptic gospels the notion given of the Messiah's function is for the most part latter-day Jewish; he is to preside over the approaching day of judgment, and his apostles are to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. The early Jesuists, accordingly, must have held themselves included in the Judaic fold. All sections alike, down to the rise of anti-Jewish Gnosticism, founded on the Jewish sacred books in the Greek translation; a moral manual of the Jewish Twelve Apostles, as we have seen, served as a Jesuist handbook; and the ethic of the gospels is throughout, even in its contradictions, substantially a Jewish product. If John the Baptist could reject the racial pride and prejudice of the

Jews as he is alleged to have done, universalism had already begun within the Jewish field. Even on the point of opposition to divorce—an attitude deriving from non-Jewish rather than from Jewish ideals—there were elements in Jewry on which to found as against the looser orthodox practice; and it is quite likely that the absolute as well as the qualified prohibition in the gospels came from Jewish pens. Thus the moral and religious atmosphere of Judaism in general was perfectly compatible with the early Jesuist way of life. It is a sectarian fallacy to assume that the repellent aspects typified by the "Scribes and Pharisees," or even by the shambles of the Temple, were primary grounds for a moral revolt among Jews and proselytes, or that Jesuism so began. The types of the worse scribes and Pharisees were very speedily developed in the new sect, as in every other; and such Jesuists as are portrayed in the first epistle to the Corinthians cannot be supposed to have rejected Judaism on the score of its moral crudity. What they were much more likely to resent was its demand for tribute concurrently with its disparagement of the Gentile proselyte; and, last but not least, its barbarous rite of circumcision, for which even the pro-Jewish Jesuists had finally to substitute baptism.

The relation of Judaism to Jesuism, then, was somewhat as that of a mother country to a colony; the latter growing by help of the former, deriving from it speech, lore, ideals, methods, models, and prestige, till in time the new environment elicits special characteristics, and mere geographical division no less than self-interest vetoes the payment of the old tribute. As usual, there was in the colony a loyalist party which bitterly resisted the severance.

§ 3. *Jewish Sects: the Essenes.*

While Josephus specifies four Jewish "sects," there was in Jewry really only one dissenting sect in the modern sense of the term, apart from the Jesuists. Pharisees and Sadducees were analogous rather to the sections or "schools" of the Churches of Rome and England, the former being "orthodox and more," inasmuch as they held by the law, but further insisted on the doctrine of a future state, which was not contained in the Mosaic books; while the Sadducees, either from pre-Maccabean conservatism or from Hellenistic scepticism, held by the pure Mosaic system, of which, being for the most part of priestly status, they were the main administrators. It is noteworthy that it is the Pharisees, who held the tenet of a future life, rather than the Sadducees, who rejected it, that are most acrimoniously handled in the gospels: the former being naturally the most dangerous competitors of the new cult within the Jewish pale. A third body mentioned by Josephus, that of Judas the Galilean, was rather a political than a religious party, being bent simply on maintaining the Jewish nationality as against the Romans.

The term "sect," however, to some extent applies to the Essenes, whose existence and characteristics are specially noteworthy in connection with Christian beginnings. All the evidence goes to show that there had existed in Jewry for many generations a body so named (or perhaps formerly called *Chassidim*), living an ascetic life, rejecting animal food and animal sacrifices, avoiding wine, warm baths, and oil for anointing, wearing white garments and preferring linen to wool,

forbidding all oaths save one, and greatly esteeming celibacy. Many of them lived in a male celibate community, by their own labour, with community of goods, on the shores of the Dead Sea, under a strict hierarchical rule; but many others lived scattered through the Jewish cities, some marrying, but all maintaining ascetic principles. To secure entrance into the community there was needed a long probation. On the side of creed they held firmly by the law of Moses, yet also reverenced the sun, to which they sang a morning hymn of praise; strictly observed the Sabbath; conducted their religious services without priests, and studied magic and angelology, but tabooed logic and metaphysics. Ethically the cult was in the main one of physical purity and fraternal humility, hostile to slavery and war as well as to the normal vices, but running to mysticism on the line of a belief, often seen in early religion, that asceticism could raise men to supernatural powers. As a whole, the system had so much in common with that of the Pythagoreans on the one hand, and with the Mazdean religion and Buddhism on the other, that it must be held to prove a connection between these, and to point to a movement which once spread over Asia as far as Buddhist India, and over the Mediterranean world as far as early Grecian Italy, surviving for many centuries in scattered sects.

It thus appears that, without the intervention or even the tradition of any quasi-divine personality, there could subsist in Jewry a cult which outwent the Christist in point of asceticism and humility, attaining the kind of fraternity at which the latter ostensibly but vainly aimed, and maintaining itself for many generations on substantially celibate lines, partly by

accessions from without under a rigid probation, and partly by the adoption and education of children. Such a system, expressly aiming at selection and exclusion, negated the idea of a world religion, and, though it was still standing in the fifth century, could not survive the final ruin of its environment, save as an ideal passed on to Christian monasticism. But its long duration serves to make clear the range of possibilities open to religious movements in Palestine and the East apart from any gifts of leadership or any semblance of supernatural innovation.

How far Essenism reacted on early Jesuism cannot be ascertained. Despite some approximations, such as the veto on oaths and the esteem for celibacy, it is clear that there was no such close resemblance between the movements as has been supposed by the writers who seek to identify them; but they tell of a similar mental climate. The non-mention of Essenism in the gospels is to be explained by the fact that the two systems were not rivals. One was localised, monastic, exclusive; the other peregrine and propagandist: and only in the minds of the ill-informed Roman forgers of the second century could they be supposed to have come into hostile contact. Essenism needed no innovating Messiah; and Jesuism had to go afield for adherents.

§ 4. *Gentile Cults.*

What Christism had to compete with in the Greco-Roman world was not so much the collective principle of polytheism or the public worship of the endowed temples, as the class of semi-private cults to which itself belonged, and the popular worships equally

associated with suffering and dying Saviour-Gods. Of these the most prominent were the ancient worships of the Syrian Adonis, the Phrygian Attis, Dionysos, and the Egyptian Osiris, all of which had become partly assimilated in theory, in ritual, and in public observance. But contemporarily with Christianity there began also to spread through the empire the Persian cult of Mithra, which had been first introduced into the Roman army after the Mithridatic wars; and in the end this became the most dangerous rival of the new church. All six cults alike gave prominence to the idea of the God's death and resurrection; and all lived in a common atmosphere of ancient superstition, emotional unrest, craving for communion, anxious concern for the future and for the washing out of guilt by religious rites and penances. And all six deities were "born of a virgin."

Of the competing cults in the East the least developed in a theological sense were those of Attis and Adonis, originally deities of the Vegetation principle, whose annual death and resurrection stood primarily for the yearly decay and rebirth of the general life of Nature, and secondarily for the waning and waxing of the power of the sun. While all cults in the ancient world tended to assimilate, however, the older were marked by certain special usages; and in the case of Attis and Adonis these were the festivals which began with mourning and ended in rejoicing. Attis, son of the virgin Myrrha, was symbolised by the cut pine-tree, which meant the life principle in man and Nature; and at the spring equinoctial festival this was carried in procession to the temple of Cybelê with the effigy of a young man bound on it, to represent the dead and mutilated God. Anciently, it

would seem, there had been so bound an actual youth who was slain as a victim, and whose death was supposed to ensure at once physical fertility and moral well-being to his land and people; but in virtue of the general law of mitigation a mystic ceremony at length took the place of the primitive deed of blood. The bearing of the God's name by his priest in the mysteries was a memorial of the older time.

These mysteries were twofold. In the spring time, Attis figured as a self-slain youth, beloved by Cybelê, the Mother of the Gods, and devoted to her cultus. Later in the year, he figured as *Papas*, "Father," and Lord of All; and in this aspect he was more important than Cybelê, who was throned beside him in the mystic drama, with a crowd of women around. The initiate became *mystes Atteos*, the initiate of Attis; and at this stage the God was adored as the bringer of peace to a disorderly world. But "many were the thyrsus-bearers; few were the *mystae*": it was the spring festival that dwelt in the common knowledge and memory; and then it was that, after a day of procession and mourning, a day of solemn rites, and a "day of blood" on which the high-priest cut his arms and presented his blood as an offering, the slain demigod rose from the dead, and all was rejoicing for his resurrection. It was the great Phrygian festival; and though the Romans, in introducing the worship of the Great Mother while Hannibal maintained himself in Italy, nominally accepted her alone, it was impossible that the allied worship of Attis should be excluded from the later mysteries. The *galli* or mutilated priests, who figured in her *Hilaria* festival, were in fact the God's

representatives. Thus his was one of the popular cults of the later Roman world.

Round Adonis, the Tammuz of old Assyria, there had played for long ages a more tender devotion. For the Syrians his name meant "the Lord" (=the *Adonai* of the Hebrew Bible); and over the tale of his untimely slaughter by the boar on Mount Lebanon the Eastern women had yearly wept for a hundred generations. The "women weeping for Tammuz" in the temple of Jerusalem before the exile were his worshippers; and in the Athens of the days of the Peloponnesian war he received the same litany of mourning. For his sacred city of Byblos he was as it were the soul and symbol of the yearly course of Nature; the annual reddening of the Adonis river by the spring floods being for his devotees a mystery of his shed blood. Then came the ritual of grief, in which his wooden and painted effigy, lying with that of Aphroditê, the Goddess who loved him, took the place of the victim in the older rite in which he too was doubtless slain "for the people." The "gardens of Adonis," shallow trays in which various green plants grew quickly and as quickly died, had been originally charms to hasten the fertility of the spring, like the sacrifice itself; but long custom made them mere symbols of untimely death, and the cult was one of pathos and compassion, passing in the usual way to exultation and gaiety when, after his effigies had been thrown as corpses into the sea or the springs, the God rose from the dead on the third day, and in the presence of his worshippers, by some mummery of make-believe or mechanical device, was represented as ascending to heaven. As in the cult of Attis, it was

women who "found" the risen Lord, whose death they had mourned.

In such worships, it will be seen, much depended on the spirit of sex, which was evoked by the pairing of God and Goddess, a common principle of the ancient Semitic pantheon, here subtilised by romance. Such myths as those of Attis and Adonis, indeed, lent themselves to contrary emotions, the amorous and the ascetic passions figuring in the devotees by turns. Thus the very eunuch priests who represented the extremity of anti-sexualism were credited with a mania of licentiousness; and on the other hand the Great Mother, who in the primitive myth was enamoured of Attis, and yet in one version mutilated him, was by her graver devotees regarded in a holier light. So even Aphroditê, the lover of Adonis, had her supernal aspect as Urania; and the legend of the indifference of Adonis, like that of the self-mutilation of Attis, conveyed a precept and pattern of chastity. Everywhere, as the world grew sophisticated, and the primitive simplicity of appetite was overborne by pessimism and asceticism, the cruder cults tended to become refined and the Goddess-worships grew in dignity. At the sacred city of Hierapolis, in Syria, there was long worshipped a Goddess of immemorial fame, round whose history there floated myths like those of Cybelê and Aphroditê, Attis and Adonis, but whose prestige was apparently maintained rather by minimising than by retailing them. In her cult all the worshippers were wont to puncture their hands or necks, probably in mystic imitation of a slain demigod such as Attis, connected with her legend; and in her service ascetic priests or hermits ascended phallic pillars to win sanctity by vigils of a week long. Thus

was set up for the Goddess a religious renown comparable to that of Yahweh of Jerusalem, bringing multitudes of strangers to her every festival, and filling the treasuries of her priests with gifts.

Of kindred character and equivalent range with the cults of Attis and Adonis was that of Dionysos, the most many-sided of the divinities adopted by the Greeks from Asia. Figuring first as Bacchus, the God of wine, he seems to have made way in early Greece partly by virtue of the sheer frenzy set up in his women worshippers by unwonted potations; but such phenomena caused their own correction; and the adoption of the cult by the cities brought it within the restraining sway of Greek culture. Of all the older Greek worships, the most popular was that (also oriental in origin) of Dêmêtêr and Persephonê, the Mourning Mother and the Virgin Daughter, who had primarily signified mother earth and the seed corn; and with their worship in the great Eleusinian mysteries was bound up that of Dionysos. Son of Zeus and the Virgin Goddess Persephonê or the mortal virgin Semelê—for the myths were legion—he was carried in effigy as a new-born babe in a manger-basket on the eve of the winter-solstice. In this capacity he was pre-eminently the Babe-God, Iacchos, "the suckling." Further, he figures in one myth as being torn to pieces by the Titans, and as restored to life or re-born (after Zeus has terribly avenged him) by his mother Semelê or by the Mother-Goddess, Dêmêtêr; wherefore he is represented as a suckling at Dêmêtêr's breast. In the triennial dramatic mysteries in his honour an eating of raw flesh by the devotees was held to commemorate his sacrificial death, which was however mystically conceived to

mean the making of wine from grapes. In other and commoner forms of the sacred banquet, the wine figured specially as his blood, and the bread as Dêmêtêr = Ceres; and in this transparent form the symbolism of "body and blood" was a household word among the Romans, in whose popular religion, being assimilated to an ancient Roman God, he was known as Liber, "the child," as "Father Liber," and as Bacchus, while Ceres or Proserpine was paired with him as *Libera*. The doctrine, found among the Manichæans in the fourth century, that "Jesus hangs on every tree," is in all likelihood a development from this worship, in which Dionysos was God of the vine in particular, but of all vegetation besides. For such mystics as wrote and conned the Orphic hymns, however, he was a God of manifold potency; and there centred round him a whole theosophy of ascetic ethic, in which the ideal of the worshipper was to strive, suffer, and conquer in common with the God, who was the giver of immortality.

Of his cult in particular it is difficult to grasp any general significance, so inextricably did it become entwined with others, in particular with the Phrygian cult of Sabazios, and with the Corybantic mysteries, in connection with which are to be traced a whole series of local deities of the same stamp as those under notice, just as the myth of Apollo can be seen to have absorbed a whole series of local Sun-Gods. Thus the mortal Jasion or Iasious is slain by Zeus for being the lover of Cybelê, who however bears to him a divine son, Korybas; and he in turn figures also as the son of the Virgin Persephonê, and without father, human or divine. In the Orphic hymns Korybas is the mighty Lord of the under-world, who frees the

spirit from all terrible visions, giver of blessedness and of sorrow, a God of double nature. So Dionysos, like the Hindu Fire-God Agni, is born of two mothers; and like Hermes and Herakles he has descended to Hades and returned, victorious over death. In all such cults alike is to be noted the gradual emergence of the relation of maternity as well as paternity, the Mother Goddess coming more and more to the front as such; while the Son-God, in the case of Dionysos and Dêmêtêr, tends to overshadow or supersede the Daughter-Goddess, who in Rome had twinned with Bacchus under their names of Liber and Libera.

In the case of the far-famed cult of Osiris, again, there gradually took place a similar transformation. In the oldest Egyptian lore, Osiris is at once the brother and the husband of Isis, who, when he is slain and dismembered by Typhon, gathers together the scattered limbs for burial. Thereafter their son, Horus (who in turn had been found dead in his floating cradle and reborn by his mother), avenges his father, who remains Judge of the Dead in the underworld. But as the cult developes, Horus, who in one of his aspects—perhaps originally signifying different deities—is an adult and powerful God, becomes specially the child of Isis and Osiris, and is typically represented as a suckling at his mother's breast, or as the babe born on the eve of the winter solstice; while Osiris remains the suffering God, to be mourned and rejoiced over; and it is to him that the devotee turns in the mysteries for the mystic regeneration, which involved a worship of the Osirian cross, the emblem of the God. "I clasp the sycamore tree," says the Osirified soul in the Book of the Dead; "I myself am joined unto the sycamore tree, and its

arms are opened unto me graciously." But Osiris in turn "shall establish as prince and ruler his son Horus"; and the soul in the underworld, in some rituals, becomes one with Horus, as in others with Osiris. Out of the medley there emerged for the popular mind the dominant impressions of Osiris as the Saviour and Judge of the Dead; of Isis as the Queen of Heaven, the Sorrowing Goddess, the Mother Goddess; and of Horus as the Divine Son, Hor-pa-khrot, "Horus the Child," of whom the Greeks in their fanciful way made a Harpocrates, the God of Silence, misunderstanding the symbol of the finger in the mouth, which for the Egyptians meant merely childhood. As we have seen, the Osirian cult and that of Serapis, grafted on it in the time of the Ptolemies, made popular the symbol of the cross long before Christianity, and prepared for the latter religion in many other ways.

Perhaps its closest counterpart, however, was its most tenacious rival, the worship of the Persian Sun-God Mithra, first introduced into Rome in the time of Pompey, whose troops received it from the Cilician pirates, the *débris* of the army of Mithridates, whom he conquered and enlisted in the Roman service. Mithra being the most august of all the Gods of war, his worship became the special religion of the Roman army. Apart from its promise of immortality, its fascination lay in its elaborate initiations, baptisms, probations, sacraments, and mysteries, which were kept at a higher level of moral stringency than those of almost any of the competing cults. The God was epicene or bisexual, having a male and a female aspect; and there seems to have been no amorous element in his myth at the Christian period. Unless

it be decided that such rituals had prevailed all over the East, the Christian eucharist must be held to have been a direct imitation of that of Mithraism, which it so closely resembled that the early Fathers declared the priority of the rival sacrament to be due to diabolic agency. The Mithraist ritual, indeed, appears to have been the actual source of part of the Christist mystery-play, inasmuch as Mithra, whose special epithet was "the Rock," was liturgically represented as dead, buried in a rock tomb, mourned over, and raised again amid rejoicing. For the Mithraists also the sign of the cross, made on the forehead, was the supreme symbol; and it was mainly their cult which established the usage of calling the Sun-day, the first of the week, "the day of the Lord," Mithra as the Sun being the first of the seven planetary spirits on whose names the week was based. In the third century, the chief place of the cult in the empire was on the Vatican mount at Rome; and there it was that Christian legend located the martyrdom of Peter, who, as we have seen, was assimilated to Mithra both in name and in attributes.

In a special degree the Osirian and Dionysian and Mithraic cults seem to have insisted on the doctrine of immortality correlatively with the doctrine of eternal punishment; and in so far as Mithraism is to be known from the present form of the Zendavesta, which is but a revised portion of the older Mazdean literature, it appealed to the imagination on this side at least as winningly as did the Jesuist literature in respect, for instance, of the Apocalypse. Mithra was the God of the upper and the nether world, the keeper of the keys of heaven and hell, of life and death; and,

like Osiris, he was the judge of men's deeds. Like the other Saviour-cults, too, Mithraism anticipated Christism in evolving the attraction of a Mother-Goddess, the worship of Cybelè being adapted to his as it had been to that of Attis. In one other aspect it seems to have run closely parallel to early Jesuism. The singular phrase in the Apocalypse about garments "washed in the blood of the Lamb" points to an early Jesuist use of the practice of the *kriobolium*, which with the *taurobolium* was one of the most striking of the Mithraic rites. In these repulsive ceremonies the ram or bull—always young, on the principle that the sacrifice must be pure—was slain over a grating, so that the blood dripped on the initiate, who was placed in a pit beneath, and who was instructed to wear the blood-stained garment for some days. It was believed that the ceremony had a supreme saving grace; and the initiate was solemnly described as *in æternum renatus*, "born again for eternity." In regard to both animals the symbolism was partly astronomical, having latterly reference to the sun's entrance into the constellations of the Bull and the Ram at different stages of his course. Mithra's oldest and best-known symbol was the bull; but inasmuch as the sun had anciently been seen by the Chaldean astronomers to be in the constellation Aries at the spring season, the beginning of the ancient year, the lamb had long been likewise adopted into the mysteries of the solar cults. About the beginning of the Christian era, the year-opening constellation was Pisces; and the Divine Fish accordingly figures to a great extent in early Christian symbols.

As we have seen, the primordial Jesuism, with its Lamb "slain from the founding of the world,"

probably conceived of its deity in terms of the astronomical symbol; but the prominence given by Mithraism to the blood-ritual would serve to bring that into disuse among the Gentile Christists, whose creed further made Jesus the final paschal sacrifice, and reduced the apocalyptic phrase to a moral metaphor. Nonetheless, the rites and theories of the great pagan cults, all of which flourished in Palestine itself in the pre-Roman period, must be recognised as factors in its creation.

§ 5. *Ethics: Popular and Philosophic.*

It lies on the face of the case that the Christist cult could make no rapid headway by offering to people of any class higher ethical ideals than they had already been wont to recognise. To claim that it did is to upset the concurrent theorem that the pagan world into which Christianity entered was profoundly corrupt. If men and women on all hands welcomed the new teaching for its moral beauty, they must already have acquired a taste for such beauty, and cannot conceivably have been "sunk in trespasses and sins." It is true that in every unlettered population—in modern India and pre-Christian Mexico as well as in classic antiquity—a repute for asceticism has brought great popular honour, men reverencing a self-denial they feel unable to practise. But a cult and a community which actually seek to embrace the common people cannot exact from them a "saintliness" which in the terms of the case is a rare phenomenon. In reality, the Christian ethic was duplicated at every point by that of Judaism or of one or other of the

pagan schools or cults; and the contrast still commonly drawn between the church and its moral environment is framed by merely comparing Christian theory with popular pagan practice. Theory for theory, and practice for practice, there was no such difference.

If the ethical literature of the period be first taken, it is found that the teaching of (for instance) Seneca had so many points of identity with that of Paul as to give colour to a Christian theory that the pagan moralist and the apostle had had intercourse. It is now admitted that no such intercourse took place, and that the pretended letters of Paul and Seneca are Christian forgeries; but the community of doctrine is undisputed. It was largely traceable to elements of oriental ethic which had been imported into Greek Stoicism by writers of Semitic race; and on Seneca's side the moral principles involved are at some points much further developed than they can be said to be in either the gospels or the epistles. In some respects he is concrete and practical where the gospels are abstract, as when he condemns all war and urges habits of kindly fellowship between masters and slaves. On the latter head, Philo of Alexandria, the Jewish Platonist, went still further, explicitly condemning slavery as the worst of evils and denying Aristotle's dictum that for some men it is the natural state. Such doctrines as those of reciprocity and the forgiveness of injuries were of course the common property of the moralists of all civilised countries before the Christian era—of the teachers of China and India as well as of Greece; and the duty of practical beneficence, which in a section of the gentilising third gospel is made the whole question of moral and religious life, was indicated in almost exactly

the same terms in the much more ancient sacred books of Egypt.

Where the Christist ethic differed most from that of the higher paganism was on the point of sacrificial substitution or "salvation by blood," and on the point of moral self-humiliation. Stoicism on the contrary cultivated self-respect, here carrying on a strain of thought found in rabbinical Judaism; and it is at least an open question whether "voluntary humility" (which in the later epistles is disparaged) proved in practice the more efficient moral principle. In such a writer as Juvenal we find a protest against the habit of praying to the Gods for all manner of boons, the argument being that the Gods know better than their worshippers what the latter really need. In the gospel, a similar teaching precedes the Lord's prayer; and whereas in both cases the principle laid down is deviated from, the pagan, who prays for a sound mind in a sound body, is in no worse case than the Christist, who proceeds to pray for daily bread—if, that is, the ordinary rendering be accepted. If, as seems probable, the intention was to pray for "spiritual food," the contrast is again between a cultivation of self-reliance and a cultivation of the sense of spiritual dependence. Yet at bottom, inasmuch as the sense of divine support would theoretically give confidence, the practical outcome was probably the same, for good or for evil. When, however, to the doctrine of salvation by faith the Pauline theology added the principle that God was the potter and man the clay, without moral rights, there was set up a conception of morals which could not but be demoralising, and to which there was no parallel in the higher pagan teaching.

As regards the Christist doctrine of sacrificial salvation, it is found that both under Judaism and under paganism higher moral standards had been reached by many thinkers; and Christism, as we have seen, was rather an adhesion to the popular religious ethic, which on this side was of an immemorial antiquity. So, too, many of the greater pagan and Jewish thinkers, while holding to the belief in immortality, had long before transcended the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, and had repelled the conception of a God of wrath; whereas the Christists stressed the conceptions prevalent among average Jews and Gentiles, taking over bodily, in particular, the popular idea of hell-torments, which was as vivid, and as inefficacious, in the ancient world as in the medieval. Worse still, the new faith ultimately introduced the frightful dogma of the damnation of all unbaptised infants, a teaching before undreamt of, and capable only of searing the heart. For the rest, the formal ethic was very much the same in all cults as to the duties of honesty, truthfulness, charity, and chastity; and the practice in all seems to have been alike precarious. Not any more than any of the contemporary religions did Christism offer any such social or political guidance as might conceivably have arrested the political paralysis and decadence of the whole imperial world; on the contrary, the gospels and epistles alike predict a speedy doomsday, and counsel political submission, showing no trace of any other ideal; while at the end of the second century such a teacher as Origen is found coupling the principle of the universal Roman dominion with that of the universal church. To any surviving vestiges of the ideal of self-government, Christian literature was

broadly hostile. Inasmuch, too, as the gospel explicitly urged celibacy as a condition of ready salvation (Luke xx. 35; cp. Matthew xix. 12), it tended to hold at arm's length the mass of normal people and to attract the fanatics and the pretenders to sanctity. In all likelihood, however, such doctrines were stressed only by the more ascetic teachers and sects; the Pauline letters, for instance, holding a middle course.

Insofar, finally, as the principle of brotherly love is traditionally held to distinguish Christist teaching and practice from that of either Jews or pagans, there has occurred a fallacy of inference. All the documents go to show that the inculcation and profession of mutual love came currently from mouths which passed with no sense of incongruity to denunciation. In Christian tradition, the John who figured as the preacher of love was without misgiving called a "son of thunder" and reputed to have shown intense malice towards a heretic; and all the early teachers in turn, from Paul to Tertullian, are found alternating between praise of love and display of its contrary, even as Jesus is made by the gospel-framers to vituperate the contemporaries whom he was supposed to have exhorted to love their enemies. Even the duty of forgiveness is in one passage enforced by the threat of future torture at the hands of a Heavenly Father who is thus to imitate the cruelties of human law; whereas rationalistic thinkers among the Greeks a century or two before had grounded the duty on the naturalness of error, urging that wrongdoers should be taught rather than hated. So far were the Christists at any period from attaining the height of feeling kindly towards those

outside their creed, that they exhibited an exceptional measure of strife among themselves—this by mere reason of the openings for strife set up by their dogmatic system and the need of unifying it. In times of persecution, doubtless, they were thrown together in feeling, as any other community would be; but here, in the terms of the case, it was the persecution, not the creed, that created the fraternity. Nor can it be said that any contemporary Christian teachers, unless it might be some of the ostracised Gnostics, compare well in point of serenity and self-control with such pagans as the later Stoics. For the rest, the human material indicated in the Pauline accounts of the congregational habit of *glossolalia*, "speaking with tongues" (a mere hysterical outcry, of which the sounds had no meaning), is clearly neurotic, and must have been liable to all manner of lapses.

To say this is but to say that actual Christianity at length became popular in the only possible way —by assimilating ordinary human nature in mass. Had it persistently transcended or coerced average character, it could never have become one of the world-religions. To say, again, that the written doctrine at its best prescribed higher standards than those actually followed by its adherents, is but to claim what can equally be claimed for many other systems, popular and philosophic. The fundamental source of error in this connection is the assumption that mere moral doctrine can possibly regenerate any society independently of a vital change in social and intellectual conditions. In the ancient world, as in the modern, these were the substantial determinants for the mass of men and women.

CHAPTER III.

CONDITIONS OF SURVIVAL.

§ 1. *Popular Appeal.*

Overshadowed among the Jews by the common traditions of Judaism, and faced among the Gentiles by such competition as we have seen, the Christian cult had to acquire all the chief attractions of popular pagan religion if it was to outdo its rivals. Such success could never have been reached through mere superiority of ethical ideal, even had such superiority been present: by the admission even of Christian advocates, there were high moral ideals in most of the pagan ethical systems current among the educated class; but those systems never became popular, not seeking to be so. To gain the mass, the new propagandists found, the tastes of the mass had to be propitiated; and at best the more conscientious of them could but hope to control the ignorance and the superstition they sought to attract. When in the second and third centuries the more rigid Puritans, such as the Montanists, formed themselves into special communities, they were necessarily repudiated by the main body, which had to temper its doctrine to the characters of the average laity and the average clergy. Thus the development of primitive Christianity was necessarily such an assimilation of neighbouring lore and practice as we have already in part

traced. The story of the Christ had to take on all the lasting dramatic features of the prehistoric worships; and the mysteries had as far as possible to embody those details in the dramatic pagan fashion. Where dramatisation was going on, new details would naturally be added, all tending to the same end; and on the basis of these early dramatic inventions would arise many of the gospel narratives. This, however, must have been a matter of time.

In the earlier stages of propaganda, the appeal was primarily to Jews, and secondarily to Jew proselytes; but after the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem it must have been made in an increasing degree to Gentiles, chiefly of the poorer classes, whether artisans or traders. As among the pagan religious societies before mentioned, slaves were admitted; such being not seldom in as good a position as artisans. There is also evidence that, on the avowed theological principles of the sect, men even of bad repute were received, of course on condition of repentance. "Let him that stole, steal no more," is one of the injunctions in one of the later epistles. In the nature of the case such adherents could not be multiplied, in the teeth of the attractions of the other cults, without a continual offer of congenial entertainment; and the weekly "love-feast," on the "day of the Lord," would be the first mainstay. The constant warnings and admonitions in the epistles exclude the notion that these assemblies escaped the usual risks of disorder; and the standing problem of the supervisors was to maintain the social attraction without tolerating open licence. Insofar as they succeeded, it was by appeal to ideals of abstinence which, as we have seen, had long been current in the East.

In the main, the popular success of the movement must have depended on a compromise. When "freedom from the yoke of the law" went so far as to set up a serious scandal among the pagans (1 Cor. v.) it was necessarily suppressed; but from the first there evidently occurred such irregularities as were later charged by Tertullian against his fellow-Christians in the matter of their nocturnal assemblies. Only out of average material could a popular movement be made, and the more the cult spread the more was it compelled to assimilate the usages of paganism, giving them whatever new colour or pretext seemed best. But to the successful manipulation of such a movement there was necessary a body of propagandists, a written doctrine, and a machinery of organisation; and it was chiefly by the development of such machinery that the Christist movement secured itself in the struggle for survival. In this regard its success as against Mithraism becomes perfectly intelligible. The priests of Mithra seem never to have aimed at popular acceptance save in so far as their cult became co-extensive with the Roman army; their ideal being rather that of a religious freemasonry than that of an open community. The Christists, on the other hand, seem to have carried on from the first the Jewish impulses of fanaticism and proselytism, aiming at popularity with the acquired Jewish knowledge of the financial possibilities of any numerous movement.

§ 2. *Economic Causation.*

The play of economic interest in the establishment and maintenance of religions is one of the constant

forces in their history. In the simplest forms of savage life, the medicine-man or priest makes a superior living out of his function; and every powerful cult in antiquity enriched its priests. The developed worships of Assyria and Babylon, Phœnicia and Egypt, were carried on by great priestly corporations, with enormous revenues; those of the Egyptian priesthood in particular being reckoned even in the Roman period at a third of the wealth of the nation. Early Greece and Rome, in comparison, showed little ecclesiastical development by reason simply of the fact that their relative political freedom offered so many other channels to economic energy. In republican Rome, priesthood was a caste-privilege enjoyed by a select few, the majority of the ruling class being content to have it so; and there and in Greece alike the normal conception of deities as local, with local worships, precluded even the thought of a universal priesthood, though the Roman policy gave all the Gods of the extending State a place in the common pantheon. In old Greece it came about that the fixed ideal of the City-State, and the very multiplicity of cults even in the separate states, kept all the worships isolated; while the republican habit kept the priests and priestesses members of the body politic, and not associations apart. The Christian church began its historic growth on this ground, in the period of imperialism and decadence, with the eastern examples before it, the Jewish system of church-finance and propaganda to proceed upon, the Greek democratic practice to facilitate its first steps, and the Roman sway to allow of its spread and official organisation. Lastly came the usage, imitated from the later political and religious life of the Greeks, of Church Synods, in

which disruptive doctrinal tendencies were more or less controlled by the principle of the majority vote, and the weaker groups were assisted and encouraged by the others. In every aspect, the evolution was by way of adaptation on tried lines.

As we have seen, Judaism in the Hellenistic and Roman period was financed through a system of travelling "apostles" and collectors, who followed up the dispersed Jewish race wherever it flourished, and got together great revenues for the temple service and the priestly and rabbinical class. Jesuism began on those lines, and so set up habits of intercommunication between its groups, which for their own part were locally and independently financed by their members in the Greek and Jewish fashion. Whatever may have been the practice of enthusiasts such as Paul would appear to have been, the principle that "the labourer is worthy of his hire" must have become general; and insofar as special preaching was a requisite and an attraction for the members, the travelling preachers would have to be fee'd or salaried. One of the later epistles makes mention of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, as different types; also of elders (presbyters), deacons, and bishops (overseers); and as the groups increased and began to possess buildings, the creation of professional opportunities set up a new economic interest in propaganda.

In neither Greek nor Roman life was the phenomenon new. Centuries before the Christian era, the influx of the Dionysian and other mystic cults in Greece had been followed by the rise of swarms of religious mendicants, many of whom carried with them sacred books, and ministered consolation while playing on credulity; and on a higher plane the educated

"sophists" or humanists of the pre-Macedonian period had made a livelihood by moral and philosophical teaching or lecturing. Later, the Stoics and other philosophers became a species of religious directors or "spiritual advisers" as well as ethical lecturers; and in Rome especially this calling had practically the status of a profession. Thus had arisen a specific means of livelihood for the whole class of educated men without official posts or inherited incomes. But any religious cult which should set up an organisation would have as against such teachers an obvious financial advantage, in respect of its power of attracting numbers, its local permanence, and its means of collecting revenue; and even men incapable of success as lecturers could attain relatively secure positions as presbyters or "bishops"—that is, overseers, first of single churches, and later of district groups. The original function of the bishop was that later assigned to "elders" in the presbyterian system—the supervision of the public offerings or "collections" and their distribution among needy brethren. Later, the bishop became the religious head of the group, and its representative in communication with others. Not till such organisation was reached could the new sect count on permanence.

An important source of income from an early stage was the munificence of the richer women converts; and insofar as the Christist movement stood for a restraint on sexual licence it doubtless gained from the moral bias as well as from the superstition of women of the upper and middle classes throughout the empire. The richer women were indeed made to feel that it was their duty to make "oblations" in proportion to their means. On the other hand, then as

now, the giving of alms to the poor was a means of enlisting the sympathetic support of serious women; and the Christists here had a lead not only from oriental example in general and that of later Judaism in particular, but from the policy of food-doles now systematically pursued in the Roman empire. The later epistles show that much was made of the good offices of "widows," who, themselves poor and wholly or partly supported by the congregations, would serve as comforters of suffering or bereaved members, and ministrants to the sick. The death-rate was doubtless high in the eastern cities, then as now. In this way were attracted to the church large masses of the outside poor who were not similarly considered or sought for by any of the competing pagan cults. But it was necessary to compete in other ways with the mass of itinerant diviners and religious mendicants, who had much the same kind of vogue as the begging friars of later Christendom; and exorcists were at an early date a recognised class of officers in connection with the Christian churches.

At what stage revenue began to be derived from the usage of praying for the souls of the dead it is impossible to say; but as early as the third century it is found to be customary to recite before the altar the names of givers of oblations, who were then publicly prayed for. In various other ways the church was able to elicit gifts. It lies on the face of all the canonical books that a prediction of the speedy end of the world was one of the constant doctrines of the early church; and such a belief would naturally elicit donations in the first century as it did in the tenth. Obviously, too, the gradual development of the "mysteries" would strengthen the hands of the

priestly class. In particular, as it was early made compulsory on all baptised persons, except penitents, to take the sacrament, the privilege of administering or withholding the eucharist was a sure source of revenue, as was the power of initiation into the mysteries of the other cults for their ministrants.

§ 3. *Organisation and Sacred Books.*

It was finally to the joined influences of ecclesiastical organisation and of popular sacred books that Christism owed its measure of success as against the freely-competing pagan cults; and on both sides its primary advantage, as we have seen, came from its Judaic basis. For nearly two centuries, the Hebrew Bible, made widely accessible in the Septuagint version, was its literary mainstay, by reason of the prestige attaching to such a mass of ancient religious literature in the Greco-Roman world; and whereas other cults also had their special lore, the Christist movement was specially buttressed by its system of ecclesiastical union, also imitated from the Judaic. The ecclesiastical system, above all, was a means to the development of the new sacred books which completed the definition of Christianity as something apart from Judaism; and these in turn made a permanent foundation for the historic church. A glance at the cult associated with the name of the pagan Apollonius of Tyana, who won fame in the first century, makes it clear that even where a great renown attached to a travelling religious reformer and reputed wonder-worker, and where an adoring biography served in some degree to prolong his fame, the lack of a

hierarchy or connected series of religious groups prevented on the one hand its continuance, and on the other hand the necessary development of the literature which should conserve it.

The first traceable literature special to the Christians, as we have seen, consisted in "apostolic" and sub-apostolic epistles of exhortation, which were read aloud in the churches after the Jewish manner. Priestly needs conserved such documents, and further evoked forgeries, aimed against new heresies and schisms. But the mass of men are always more easily to be attracted by narrative than by homilies; and the mystery-play, by means of which alone could the church at the outset compete with the pagan cults similarly provided, lent itself to a written as well as to an acted history. Anyone who will attentively follow the account of the Last Supper, Betrayal, Passion, Trial, and Crucifixion in the first gospel, will see that it reproduces a series of closely-continuous dramatic scenes, with no room given to such considerations as would naturally occur to a narrator of real events, and no sign of perception of the extreme improbability of the huddled sequence set forth. A more or less unnatural compression of events is the specific mark of drama, even in the hands of great masters, as Shakspere and Ibsen; and the primitive mystery-play, as might be expected, is excessively compressed. Jesus is made to take the Passover after dark; then to go forth in the night with his disciples, who sleep while he prays; then to be captured in the darkness by a "multitude"; then to be taken straight to the high priest, "where the scribes and the elders were gathered together." These now proceed, in the middle of the night, to "seek false witnesses," and

"many false witnesses" come, to no purpose, till "afterward" come two who testify to his words about destroying the temple; whereupon he is judged and buffeted, and the night's history ends with the episode of Peter's denial. No hint is ever given of anything said or done or felt by Jesus on the way from the Supper to the Mount, or in the interval between the Jewish and the Roman trials.

Such a narrative cannot have been originally composed for reading. A writer, whether inventing or reproducing hearsay, would have sought to explain the strangely protracted midnight procedure of the high priest and scribes and elders; would have given some thought to the time necessary between event and event; would have thought of the Lord in his dungeon. The story before us yields exactly what could be scenically enacted, nothing more; and where on the stage the successive scenes would originally raise no question of the time taken, the unreflecting narrative loses all verisimilitude by making everything happen in unbroken sequence, and by making the Master utter words of prayer which, apart from the audience of the drama, there was no one to hear. In the play the "false witnesses" would of necessity be sent for and introduced without lapse of time, and the action would raise in a popular audience no perplexity, where the narrative loses all semblance of probability by turning the dramatic act into a historical process. After the unspecified slight pause till "the morning was come," the action is resumed before Pilate with the same dramatic speed, and the execution impossibly follows immediately on the trial. We are reading the bare transcript of a mystery-drama; a transcript so bare that, in the scene of the Passion, the speech beginning

"Sleep on now," and that beginning "Arise, let us be going," are put together as if they were one utterance, without specification of the required exit and entrance between.

Such a document is in itself the proof of the priority of the mystery play to the gospel story. In this degree of detail the play must belong to a stage of the movement at which it had made some Gentile headway; and its reduction to writing may be supposed to have taken place either at a time when the Christians by reason of persecution were prevented from carrying on their usual rituals or festivals, or, more probably, when the hierarchy decided for prudential or disciplinary reasons to abandon the regular resort to dramatic spectacle. It does not follow, of course, that none of the didactic parts of the gospel were in writing before the play was transcribed; but the fact that none of the Pauline epistles quote any of the Jesuine teachings, and that the first Clementine epistle alludes to but one or two, is a reason for holding that they came very slowly into existence. The dramatic development would naturally occur for the most part or wholly in Gentile hands. It is not certain, indeed, that the later Jews remained uniformly averse to drama, which was partly forced on them by the Herods; and the theory of a dramatic origin for the Apocalypse is not quite untenable; but it happens that the most obviously dramatic parts of the gospel story are those which, on Gentile lines, throw the guilt of the crucifixion on the Jews.

When once a gospel existed, interpolation and alteration were for some generations easy; and what happened was a multiplication of doctrines and

documents at the hands of different groups or sects or leaders, the men with dogmatic or moral ideas taking this means to establish them, without regard to the coherence or consistency of the texts. Many passages are visibly inserted in order to countervail others, it being easier to add than to suppress. Only late in the second century can a canon have begun to be formed, as the Clementine epistles quote a now lost document in the nature of a Gospel, and Justin's "Memoirs of the Apostles" diverge from those preserved. The later rejection by the Church of such documents proves them to have been regarded as in part heretical; and parts of the canonical gospels were altered for various dogmatic reasons after they had been made to include much of the matter in the uncanonical. The third gospel avows that "many" previous narratives existed; and apart from all these there have been preserved a number of rejected gospels, which run mainly to miraculous stories. Some of these were long abundantly popular, that of "Nicodemus" having had common vogue down to the Middle Ages. But the more thoughtful clergy would soon recognise the greater value of documents which by their teaching could impress the more educated of the laity; and the double influence of the supernaturalism and the moral appeal went to create cohesion throughout the movement.

The organisation, in turn, operated as a check on the spread of heresies, which, after carrying it further afield, soon threatened to dissolve the cult into an infinity of mutually repellent groups. Insofar, indeed, as these appealed to the more speculative and quasi-philosophic minds, they were foredoomed to decay with the decay of culture, and to be at best the

creed of the few. Those, in particular, who carried anti-Semitism to the point of discrediting the Jewish Deity, lost the support of the Jewish sacred books, of which the mere literary mass and variety constituted in such an age a solid basis for a cultus. Yet even on those lines the Manichæan cult spread far and lived long, so easy was it for any cult to rise. Survival lay with simple concrete myth of the popular sort, concrete ritual, and explicit dogma; and the needs of popular faith kept ever to the front the human aspect of the crucified God, even when he was being dogmatically declared to be at once distinct from and one with his co-eternal Father. This indeed was but one of the many irreducible contradictions imbedded in the sacred books. To bring these to consistency was impossible; but the hierarchy could set up formal creeds over and above them; and it mattered little to the official and financial continuity of the Church that these creeds were themselves chronically altered. What was necessary to success was simply some common standard and common action.

§ 4. *Concession and Fixation.*

It is not to be supposed that any abnormal sagacity presided over the formation of either the creed and canon or the official system of the Church; but insofar as it survived it can be seen to have done so in virtue alike of assimilation and of refusal to assimilate. Much expansion was needed to make an area broad enough for the pagan populace; and on the side of custom and myth hardly any pagan element was ultimately refused. At the outset the great cause of

strife between Christian and pagan was the contemptuous refusal of the former to show any respect for "idols"—a principle derived by Jewry from Persia, and passed on to the first Jesuists. When, however, the Christian cult became that of the State, it of necessity reverted, as we shall see, to the psychology of the multitude, and carried the use of images as far as pagans had ever done. Even the so-called "animal-worship" of the Egyptians partly survived in such usages as the presence of the sacred ox and ass in the mystery-play of the Nativity (an immemorial popular rite, belonging to sun-worship), in the adoption of the "four *zoa*" of the Apocalypse as the symbols of the four evangelists, and in the conception of "the Lamb." Before the period of image-worship, too, the Church had fully accepted the compromise by which countless pagan "heroes" and "geniuses," the subjects of local cults, became enrolled as saints and martyrs, whose bones had given to tombs and wells and shrines a sacred virtue, and whose old festival-days became part of the new ecclesiastical calendar. Above all, there was finally forced on the Church a cult of the Mother as Virgin Goddess, without which it could never have held its own against the great and well-managed worships of Isis and Rhea-Cybelê and Dêmêtêr; since the first and last in particular aroused in multitudes a rapture of exalted devotion such as was not psychologically possible towards even a crucified God, save insofar as the emotion of women worshippers towards the slain demigod realised that of male devotees towards the Queen of Heaven and the Mother and sustainer of things. If the original Jesus of the myth had not had a mythical mother, it would have been

necessary to invent one. Once invented, her elevation to the honours of Isis was inevitable.

No less necessary, on the other hand, to the official survival of the new system was a dogmatic limit to new doctrine. Where concrete myth and ritual enlarged the scope of the cult, freedom of abstract speculation dissipated its forces and menaced its very existence. All manner of streams might usefully flow into its current, but when the main river threatened to break up into a hundred searching rivulets there was a prospect of its being wholly lost in the sands. This danger, sometimes charged solely upon the Gnostics, arose with the very first spread of the cult; every Pauline epistle, early or late, exhibiting the scope it gave for schism and faction. Mere random "prophesying," which it was difficult to discountenance, meant endless novelties of doctrine. At every stage at which we can trace it, the early Church is divided, be it by Judaism against Gentilism, faith against works, Paul against Apollos, or one Jesus against another: the very nature of the forces which made possible the propaganda involved their frequent clash; and multitudes of converts were doubtless won and lost in the chances of sectarian strife. When to the Jews and proselytes and illiterates of the earlier movement there began to be added speculative Gentile Gnostics, for whom Yahweh was but one of many rival tribal Gods, and Jesus one of many competitive slain Saviours, there came with them a species of heresy which bade fair to lull all schism in a euthanasia of universalism. The theosophies of Egypt and the East were alike drawn upon in the name of Christism, and there resulted endless webs of grandiose

mysticism, in which the problem of the Cosmos was verbally solved by schemes of intermediary powers between deity and man, and endless periods of transformation between the first and the last states of matter. In these philosophies Jesus was explained away or allegorised just as were the Gods of paganism, and the motive force of fanatical ill-will against those deities on the score of their characters was lost in a reconciling symbolism. Framed for brooding minds that could not rest in the primitive solutions of the popular cults, such systems on the other hand could never attach or hold the mass of the people; and as they were yet produced on all hands, the Christian organisation was soon forced to define its dogma if it would keep any distinguishing faith. Insofar as so-called Gnosticism lent itself obediently to the embellishment of the canonical writings, and the confutation of the heathen—as in the works of Clement of Alexandria—it was accepted without much demur; but all new or independent theory was tabooed. Speculative minds were dangerous things in a church aiming at practical success; and they were assiduously barred out.

The conservative process, of which we shall trace the history, was carried on partly by documentary forgeries, partly by more honest polemic, partly by administrative action and the voting of creeds. But in the nature of the case the forgeries, where successful, were the most central and decisive forces; and we may still see, in the schematic narratives of the Acts of the Apostles, in the interpolations of the Apocalypse, in some of the readjustments of the gospel text, and in the more certainly spurious Pauline epistles, how faction and fanaticism were fought with intelligent

fraud; and how a troublesome popular delusion was guarded against by creating another that lent itself to official ends. The "true" creed is just the creed which was able to survive.

§ 5. *Cosmic Philosophy.*

As we have seen, Gentile philosophy did actually enter into the sacred books of the new faith, notably in the doctrine of the *Logos* or "Word," which in the fourth gospel virtually reshapes the entire Jesuist system. That gospel, rather than the preaching of Paul, is the doctrinal foundation of Gentile Christianity. In the synoptics the founder broadly figures as a Judaic Messiah, who is shortly to come again, at the world's end, to judge the quick and the dead; and only for a community convinced of the speedy approach of doomsday could such a religion suffice. In the Pauline as in the other epistles we see the belief in full play; and only in one of the later forgeries (2 Thess. ii.) is a caveat inserted. When the period loosely specified for the catastrophe was clearly passed, and the Church had become an economic institution like another, it must needs present a religion for a permanent world if it was to hold its own; and while the changing speculations of the Gnostics must be vetoed in the interests of solidarity, some scheme of philosophic dogma was needed which, like theirs, should envisage the world as an enduring process. Paul's polemic did but claim for believing Gentiles a part in the Jewish salvation, and such a view had been reached by Philo before him. The fourth gospel, substituting the Christ-sacrifice for the Jewish

Passover, and putting a world-Logos in place of a descendant of David, gave the theoretic basis of a permanent cosmopolitan cult analogous to those of Egypt and Persia. The invention of a gentilising history of the first apostles was a part of the same process of adaptation; but the fourth gospel supplied the religion for the Church which the official adaptors sought to develop.

Such an evolution was psychologically prepared for by the whole drift of latter-day Jewish thought outside of Judea. The idea of "the Word" of the deity as an entity, capable of personification, had long belonged to Jewish theology in terms of many passages in the Old Testament, and is but one variant of the psychological process by which Brahmans came to conceive of the Vedas, and Moslems of the Koran, as eternal existences. The Chaldaic word *Memra* had already much of the mystic significance of *Logos*, which meant both "word" and "reason"; the books of Proverbs, Job, and the Wisdom of Solomon had made familiar the conception of a personified divine Wisdom, dwelling beside the deity; and the Alexandrian Jew Philo had made the *Logos* a central figure in his theosophy. But in the theosophies of Egypt and Persia the same conception had long been established; Plato had made it current in the theosophy of the Greeks, combining it with a mystic doctrine of the cross; and Thoth and Hermes and Mithra were already known as the *Logos* to their worshippers. Thus, whether the fourth gospel were framed at Ephesus or at Alexandria, by a cosmopolitan Jew or by a Gentile proselyte, it had grounds of appeal to every Christist save the original Judaic Jesuists, whose monopoly it was framed to overthrow. It of course gave no coherent philosophy of the universe,

and merely evaded the problem of evil, which the Gnostics were constantly seeking to solve; but it was none the worse a religious document for that.

Nonetheless, it needed the stress of circumstance to force it into its fitting place in the new religion. Despite the many passages inserted to bring its narrative into harmony with the other gospels, the fourth differs so much more from them than they do from each other that only the vital needs of the cult in its struggle for existence can account for the final adoption of all four. But these needs were compulsive, and overrode the opposition the fourth gospel evoked. Such a mass of doctrine purporting to come from the very mouth of the founder could not in any case be refused by such a community; and when once the treatise on such grounds had been taken into the canon, it played its part in paralysing the faculty of judgment. The fourth gospel directly excludes the pretence that the God-man was born at Bethlehem; yet it was grouped, like the second, which ignores the tale, with the first and third, which circumstantially yet discordantly enounce it. Where irreconcilable differences on the most essential matters of biographical fact could thus be let pass, the widest divergence of doctrinal idea could find acceptance. The two pressures of predisposition and corporate interest availed to override the difficulties they had created; and the primary momentum of ignorant credulity among the faithful carried all before it. Easiness of belief correlated with proneness to invention, and the religious community cohered, as others do, by force of the gregarious bias, the hostile environment, and the economic interest.

PART II.—CHRISTIANITY FROM THE SECOND CENTURY TO THE RISE OF MOHAMMEDANISM.

CHAPTER I.

SCOPE AND CHARACTER OF THE UNESTABLISHED CHURCH.

§ 1. *Numbers and Inner Life.*

When the "Catholic" Christian Church becomes politically and socially distinguishable in the second century, it is a much less numerous body than is pretended in the literature of its champions. Formulas such as those used in the Acts of the Apostles (chaps. iii. iv. v. vi.) greatly falsify the state of the case. The first "churches" in the cities of Asia Minor, like the groups addressed by Paul in his epistles, were but small conventicles, meeting in private houses. Even in the fourth century, sixty years after Constantine's adoption of the faith, the church of Antioch, one of the oldest and most important, appears to have numbered only a fifth part of the population of the city, or about one hundred thousand out of half-a-million. In the extensive diocese of Neo-Cæsarea, in the third century, there were declared to be only seventeen believers; and in

the church of Rome itself, in the same century, there were probably not more than fifty thousand members all told out of a population of over a million. In Egypt again there was no church outside Alexandria till about the end of the second century. Thus the language of Justin and Tertullian and other Fathers, to the effect that the Christians were everywhere throughout the empire, and that the gospel had been preached and Jesus prayed to in every nation, is mere rhetoric in the oriental taste. Only in the towns of the empire—though often in small towns in the East—did the church exist at all: the *pagani* or people of the rural districts were so uniformly fixed in their beliefs that their name became for Christians the generic term for the adherents of the old faiths; and though there were some missionary movements in Persia and Arabia, the western provinces were hardly at all reached by the propaganda in the first two centuries. Even in Gaul there were few adherents; while as regards Britain, where there is said to have been a group at York in the third century, there is not to be found a single monumental trace of the presence of Christianity during the four centuries of the Roman occupation, though remains of the Mithraic cult, which flourished in the army, are frequent. At the end of the second century, then, probably not a hundredth part of the population even of the central provinces of the Roman empire was Christianised, while the outlying provinces were practically unaffected.

Of the average inner life of the converts at this period it is possible to form some idea by noting at once the current doctrine, the claims of the apologists, the complaints of the apostolic and later epistles, and

the tenour and temper of the whole literature of the Church. Something too may be inferred from the fact that the early believers were mainly easterns even in Rome itself. Even on these data, indeed, it would be a mistake to assume that any concrete character type was predominant; but at several points we are entitled to generalise as between the Christian movement and its antecedents and surroundings. It was, for instance, very weakly developed on the intellectual side, avowedly discouraging all use of reason, and limiting the mental life to religious interests. Save for a certain temperamental and moral energy in some of the Pauline epistles, there is nothing in the propagandist literature of the early Church which bears comparison with the preceding literature of Greece and Rome. The traditions concerning the apostles present men of a narrow and fanatical vision and way of life, without outlook on human possibilities, joyless save by way of religious exaltation, painfully engrossed in theological contention and apocalyptic forecast. The happiest teachers were perhaps the least intelligent. Papias, bishop at Hierapolis, whom Eusebius later presents as having talked with men who had heard the apostles, is pronounced by that historian to have been of small understanding; and his ideas of the millennium, as passed down, justify the criticism. Other traditional figures of the second century, as the bishops Polycarp and Ignatius, are presented mainly in their character of hortatory martyrs, the most advantageous light in which ungifted men can be placed; and not a line ascribed to them is above suspicion. Of the early Christians in general, indeed, a transfiguring ideal has been shaped in terms of the aspect of martyrdom and persecution—trials

which, by forcing men and women back on the central virtues of courage and constancy, positively ennoble character. Such a compensating dignity of endurance is found where it is apt to be least expected—in men and women long broken to oriental tyranny; in Egyptian fellaheen, used to the lash; in peasants wont mutely to toil and obey. But the possibility of such a correlation does not alter the facts of normal life for the types in question. Ignorance and fanaticism and superstition yield their normal fruits in normal conditions. And there is Christian record that even among the martyrs there were men of bad character, seeking a short way to Paradise.

Of the early Christian community many were slaves, and perhaps from three to five per cent paupers. The proportion of women was perhaps as large as it is in the churches of to-day; for it was one of the pagan taunts that to women the preachers preferred above all to address themselves, and rich women members seem to have been relatively numerous. All orders alike believed fervently in evil spirits; and the most constant aspect of their faith was as a protection against demoniacal influence. In the service of the Church of Rome in the third century there were forty-six presbyters, seven deacons, seven sub-deacons, forty-two acolythes or clerks, and fifty "readers," *exorcists*, and janitors; and the exorcists were at least as hard-worked as any other members of the staff. On the side of morality, much stress was laid on the sins of the flesh, partly because these were the commonest, partly because the idea of an intellectual ethic had not arisen; and while the Church was liable to gusts of persecution its practice was naturally somewhat strict. Men and women who had

joined the body mainly for its alms or its *agapæ* were not likely to adhere to it in times of trouble; and the very proclamation of an ascetic standard would primarily attract those persons, found in every community, who had a vocation for asceticism. At almost any period, however, such were to be found in the heretical or dissentient groups as well as in the main body, while the testimony of the Pauline epistles is distinct as to the antinomianism of many "apostolic" converts. Some Gnostic sects were stringently ascetic if others were antinomian, the *à priori* principle lending itself alternately to the doctrines that the spirit must mortify the flesh and that the deeds of the flesh are nothing to the spirit. Within the main body, the conflicting principles of faith and works, then as later, involved the same divergences of practice. The evidence of Tertullian is emphatic as to the illusoriness of much Christian profession in his day in the churches of Carthage, where zeal was at least as abundant as elsewhere.

Taken individually, then, an average Christian of the second century was likely to be an unlettered person of the "lower-middle" or poorer classes; living in a town; either bitterly averse to "idols," theatres, the circus, and the public baths, or persuaded that he ought to be; utterly credulous as to demons and miracles; incapable of criticism as to the sacred books; neurotic or respectful towards neurosis; readily emotional towards the crucified God and the sacred mystery in which were given the "body and blood"; devoid alike of æsthetic and of philosophic faculty; without the thought of civic duty or political theory; much given to his ritual; capable of fanatical hatred and of personal malice; but either constitu-

tionally sober and chaste or chronically anxious to be so, and in times of persecution exalted by the passion of self-sacrifice; perhaps then transiently attaining even to the professed ideal of love towards enemies. But the effective bonds of union for the community, whether in peace or during persecution, were rather the ruling passion of hostility to pagan beliefs and usages and the eager hope of "salvation" than any enthusiasm of humanity, social or even sectarian. And, as an orthodox ecclesiastic has remarked, we cannot "even cursorily read the New Testament without being astonished by the allusions so often made to immoral persons calling themselves Christians."

Over such worshippers, in the first centuries, presided a clergy of precarious culture, sometimes marked by force of character, never by depth or breadth of thought. To compare the Christian writers of the ancient world with the pagan thinkers who had preceded them by three or more centuries is to have a vivid sense of the intellectual decadence which had accompanied the growth of imperialism. From Plato to Clement of Alexandria, from Aristotle to Tertullian, there is a descent as from a great plateau to arid plains or airless valleys: the disparity is as between different grades of organism. But even between the early Christian fathers and the pagans near their own time the intellectual and æsthetic contrast is flagrant. Justin Martyr and Clement, put in comparison with either Plutarch or Epictetus, create at once an impression of relative poverty of soul: the higher pagan life is still the richer and the nobler; the Christian temper is more shrill and acrid, even where, as in the case of Clement, it is nourished by learning and pagan metaphysic. Even the cultured and

relatively liberal Origen, in his reply to Celsus, is often at a moral disadvantage as against the pagan, who, especially when he passes from mere polemic on Jewish lines to philosophic thought, is distinctly more masculine and penetrating. So far from being less superstitious, the Christian reverts to such vulgar beliefs as that in the magical virtue of certain divine names. Yet Origen, who was born of educated Christian parents, is almost the high-water mark of ancient Christian literature on the side of culture and mental versatility (185–254).

Up to the time of Clement and Origen, then, it may be said, the Christian cult had won from paganism hardly one mind of any signal competence; religious humanists such as Plutarch and fine moralists such as Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus having gone to their graves without being even transiently attracted by it. What laughter was left in literature remained aloof from religion; Lucian could have no place in the church, though it is probably his ridicule of pagan deities that has won the preservation of his works at Christian hands. It is only when the disease of empire has invaded all the sources of the higher life, in the third and fourth centuries, that the Christian writers, themselves representing no intellectual recovery, begin to be comparable, mind for mind, with those of contemporary paganism; and even then largeness of vision seems to linger rather with the mystics of the older way of thought, as Porphyry and Plotinus, than with the bitter polemists of the newer faith, as Cyprian and Arnobius. The moral note which in the modern world is supposed to be typically and primordially Christian, that of the *Imitatio Christi*, is the one note never struck by the Christian Fathers,

or, if sounded, never sustained. It is rather a result of medieval brooding, the outcome of many generations of cloister life and of a settled ecclesiastical order, which walled-in an abnormal peace.

During those ages in which the Christian Church was so spreading as to become at length the fit cultus of the decaying State, its history is almost wholly one of internal and external strifes, conflicts between the Church and its pagan persecutors, between its literary champions and pagan criticism, between the champions of orthodoxy and the innovating heretics, between the partisans of dogmas whose life-and-death struggle was to determine what orthodoxy was to be. The central sociological fact is the existence of an organisation with a durable economic life—durable because of ministering to an enduring demand—in a society whose institutions were suffering more and more from economic disease. Of this organisation the component parts united to resist and survive external hostility when that arose; and for the command of its power and prestige, later, the conflicting sections strove as against each other. In the history of both forms of strife are involved at once that of its dogmas and that of its hierarchic structure.

§ 2. *Growth of the Priesthood.*

In the Jesuist groups of the first century, as we have seen, there were "bishops" or overseers, and other "presbyters" or elders, so named in simple imitation of the usages of other Greek-speaking religious societies, Jewish and Gentile, in the eastern parts of the empire. The bishop was merely the

special supervisor and distributor of the "collection," whether of money or of other gifts, and was spiritually and socially on the same level with the presbyters and deacons. None was specially ordained, and ordinary members could at need even administer the eucharist. Teaching or preaching was not at first a special function of any member of a group, since any one could be a "prophet" (unless indeed the "prophets" were so named later, after the supervising priest or bishop in certain Egyptian temples, whose function was to distribute revenue); but discourses were for a time given by travelling apostles, who aimed at founding new groups, and who ministered the eucharist wherever they went. It lay in the nature of the case, however, that the function of the bishop should gain in moral authority because of its economic importance; and that the informal exhortations or "prophesyings" of the early days, which were always apt to degenerate into the hysterical *glossolalia*, or unintelligible "tongues," should be superseded by the regular preaching of ostensibly qualified men. In the first century these must have been few, and they would usually be made the acting bishops, who would gradually become more and more identified with the administration of the "mysteries," and would naturally repel "lay" interference. Here again there was pagan precedent, some of the pagan societies having a "theologos," while in all the "bishop" had a certain precedence and authority.

As congregations grew and services multiplied, however, the bishop would need assistance, and to this end presbyters became officially associated with him as con-celebrants. Only gradually, however, did the sacerdotal spirit take full possession of the cult.

Liturgy was long a matter of local choice; and it is probable that the complete mystery-play of the Passion and Crucifixion and Resurrection was never performed save at a few large centres, in competition with special pagan attractions of the same kind; but a eucharist, with varying ritual and hymns, sung by special officials, was the primary function of every church. As numbers and revenue increased, men of an ambitious and administrative turn would inevitably tend to enter the movement; and the second century was not out before the avarice and arrogance of leading bishops were loudly complained of. Nonetheless, their self-assertion promoted the growth of the sect. Such men, in point of fact, tended to build up the Church as warlike nobles later built up the fabric of feudalism, or self-seeking "captains of industry" the special structure of modern commercial societies. Righteousness and gentleness and spirituality could no more create a popular and revenue-yielding Church in the Roman empire than they can to-day create and maintain a "paying" industrial organisation. An early bishop, indeed, needed to recommend himself to the congregation, in order to be elected; but in a large town, with personal magnetism and a staff of priests, he was certain to become a determining force in church affairs. The aspiring priest looked forward to a bishopric for himself; and in an illiterate congregation there could be no effectual resistance to official assumptions which were made with any tact. Thus were the scribes and Pharisees rapidly duplicated.

In an age of unbounded credulity the invitation to deceit was constant; and, while credulity itself means the faculty for innocent false witness, it could not be but that frauds were common in matters of miracle-

working of all kinds. To suppose that all the miracle-stories arose in good faith when the deliberate manufacture of false documents and calculated tamperings with the genuine were a main part of the literary life of the Church, is to ignore all probability. The systematic forgery and interpolation of "Sibylline Books," by way of producing pagan testimonies and prophecies on the side of Christism, is to be regarded as a clerical industry of the second century. A bishop's business was to forward the fame and interests of his Church; and in Ambrose's transparent account of his discovery of miracle-working relics of saints at Milan in the fourth century we have a typical instance of the methods by which the prestige of the faith was advanced. Ambrose was above and not below the moral average of previous bishops. To find what might pass for the bones and relics of saints and martyrs, to frame false tales concerning them, to win illiterate and poor pagans to the Church by imitating their festivals and ceremonies—these were, by the grieving admission of many Christian historians, among the common activities of the Church from the second or third century onwards; and the priesthood were the natural agents of the work. By the very fact, however, that there were special reputations for wonder-working, as that of Gregory Thaumaturgus in the third century, we are reminded that the pretence was not universal. Imposture is a variation like another; and there must always have been a good proportion of normally honest minds, however unintelligent and uncritical. It was their incapacity that evoked fraud. Some, on the other hand, have recorded how the bones of executed robbers were at times made to do duty as relics of martyrs.

On one side the character of the early as of the later clergy of the "Catholic" Church has suffered severely from their own affirmation of a primitive theory of morals to which they could not conform. In an age of lessening science and freedom, with growing superstition, the barbarian ideal of asceticism gained ground like other delusions. The idea that by physical self-mortification men attain magical or intercessory power in spiritual things—an idea found in all ancient religions, and enforced in numerous pagan priesthoods—was imposed to some extent on Christism from the first, and became more and more coercive as the cult passed out of Jewish hands. The average presbyter of the second century, accordingly, won his repute for sanctity in many cases by professing celibacy, which in a large number of cases was too hard for him to maintain; and between his own unhappy ideal and the demand of the crowd that he should fulfil it, his life became in general a deception. In these matters the multitude is always preposterously righteous. Aztecs in the pre-Christian period, we know, were wont to put to death professed ascetics who lapsed; and the normal denunciation of priestly immorality in Europe in the Middle Ages seems rarely to have been checked by the thought that the priest's error consisted in taking up a burden he could not bear. That priests ought to be celibate the average priest-taught layman never doubted. Hence a premium on hypocrisy in the period of church-creation. An artificial ethic created an artificial crime, and Christian morality evolved demoralisation. In the second century began the practice of open priestly concubinage, often on the naïve pretence of a purely spiritual union. Denounced periodically by

bishops and councils for hundreds of years, it was never even ostensibly checked in the period of the empire; and the later discipline of the Western Church did but drive the symptom beneath the surface to form a worse disorder.

In the Roman period no machinery existed by which celibacy could be enforced. Councils varied in their stringency on the subject, and many bishops were capable of voting for a rule to which they did not in private conform. As for the bishopric of Rome, it had at that time only a ceremonial primacy over the other provinces. In the second century, Bishop Victor of Rome is recorded to have passed sentence of excommunication on the easterns who would not conform to his practice in the observation of Easter; but his authority was defied, and his successors do not seem even to have asserted it in any similar degree for centuries. In the third century, Bishop Cyprian of Carthage, the first zealous prelatist in the literature of the Church, claimed merely primacy, without superior authority, for the chief bishoprics, and for Rome over the rest. All bishops he held to be spiritually equal—as indeed all presbyters, bishops included. This held good theoretically as late as the fourth and fifth centuries, with the exception that by that time the bishop alone had the right to appoint to Church offices—originally the function of the whole community. But alike the internal and the external conditions made for the creation of a hierarchy. When in the third century the puritan party in the Church at Rome sought to appoint Novatian as its separate bishop, alongside of another, the bishops in the provinces, led by Cyprian, zealously resisted, and secured the principle that no town should have more

than one bishop. In other ways the bishops necessarily gathered power. To them had soon to be relegated the right of admitting or refusing new members; and when there arose the question of the treatment of those who lapsed in a time of persecution, there was no way to secure uniformity of method save by leaving the matter to the bishops, who in the main agreed on a rule. For such uniformity they naturally strove in the days of danger; and the Church Synods, which began in the second century and developed in the third, were tolerably unanimous up to the time of the Establishment of the Church under Constantine (313). It was when the Church as a whole had no longer cause to fear the heathen that the worst strifes arose.

§ 3. *The Gnostic Movement in the Second Century.*

In New Testament Greek, the same word has to stand for "sect" and "heresy," a fact premonitory of what must happen to every new idea in religion. Any process of reasoning whatever must have led to differences of opinion among the converts of Paul or of the Pauline epistles; and such differences, leading necessarily, among zealots, to animosities, are among the first phenomena of Christism. As we have seen, the chief "heresies" of the first century, stigmatised as such by the later Church, were really independent cults older than itself; and there is reason to think that the "Nicolitaines" execrated in the Apocalypse were really the followers of Paul. At the beginning of the second century, again, the first heretics on record are the Elcesaites, who, however, are obviously

not an offshoot from the Christists, but a separate body, their Christ being a gigantic spirit and their doctrine a cluster of symbolisms. It is with the so-called Gnostics, the claimants to a higher *Gnosis* or knowledge, that heresy begins in Gentile Christianity; and as some of these are already in evidence in the Pauline epistles, and had interpolated the synoptics (Mt. xiii., Mk. iv., Lk. xii. 49, ff.), to say nothing of framing the fourth gospel, they may fairly be reckoned among "the first Christians." Ere long, however, they begin clearly to differentiate from the Christism of the New Testament.

If the early Gnostic systems be compared with that of Paul, they will be found to have rather more in common with it than with the Judaic Jesuism from which he ostensibly broke away. It is thus not unlikely that their Christism, like his, is older than that of the gospels, which is primarily of Jewish manufacture. The "Simonians" of Samaria have every appearance of being non-Jewish Christists "before Christ"; and the later Gnostics have several Samaritan affinities. Like Paul, they have no Jesuine biography; but whereas he holds by an actual man Jesus, however nondescript, they usually declare outright for a mere divine phantom, bearing a human semblance, but uncontaminated by mixture with matter, which was the Gnostic symbol for all evil. They did but attach the name of the Christos, and the hope of salvation, to a general theosophy, as Paul attached it to Judaism; and their great preoccupation was to account formally for the existence of evil, which they commonly figured as either an evil power or an essential quality of matter, forever opposed to the principle of good. Hence the allusion to the

"oppositions of science falsely so-called"—that is, "the antitheses of the Gnosis"—in the Pauline epistle. But they varied somewhat in details according to their environment, being roughly divisible into two groups—Asiatic and Egyptian.

At the beginning of the second century those of Syria are identified with the teaching of Saturninus of Antioch, in whose theory a good God had made the seven angels, who in turn made the world and created a low type of animal man in God's image, whom, however, God compassionately endowed with a reasonable soul. Of the seven angels one was left to rule the world, and figured as God of the Jews; but the others competed with him; and Satan, the chief evil power, made a race of men with an evil soul. Thereupon the Supreme God sent his son as Jesus Christ, human only in seeming, to bring men to the knowledge of the Father and defeat the rebel angels. Another Syrian, Bardesanes, who lived in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, was less anti-Jewish, and made the one God the creator of the world and of man, who was at first ethereal and pure, but seduced and so degraded to the form of flesh by the Adversary; the Christ's function being to secure a higher future life to those who accept him. From both points of view, mortification of the flesh was a primary duty—all the carnal instincts being evil—and Jesus on the same ground was denied bodily existence. Always the effort is to account for evil as involved in matter, the work not of the Supreme God, but of a subordinate power who will be vanquished. Thus Tatian, a pupil of Justin Martyr and contemporary with Saturninus, makes the world-creator a subordinate God, and seems to have derived Judaism and the gospel similarly from

inferior deities. Some, as Bardesanes and Tatian, held by a bodily resurrection; others, as Saturninus and Cerdo (fl. 140), stressed the anti-material principle and denied that the resurrection could be in bodily form. On such an issue, of course, it was easy to compromise in the concept of a "spiritual body," the same to the eye as the real body, but impalpable to touch—in short, the "spirit" of all ages.

It is reasonable to infer that the Gnostic systems were suggested by the spectacle of the earthly Governments around them, no less than by the previous theologies. Even as the Autocrator reigned without governing, and the evils of misgovernment were chargeable on proconsuls, so, it was thought, the head of the universe, the Pantocrator, could not be implicated in the evil wrought under him. Such a conception seems to have first arisen in the great monarchies of the East. It followed, however, that as some satraps and proconsuls governed well, there might be good subordinate deities; and in the system of Basilides the Egyptian, who belonged to the brilliant reign of Hadrian, the attribute of goodness is graded endlessly, down to the angels of the 365th heaven, who made this world and its inhabitants. As in the system of Saturninus, God gives these a reasonable soul, but the angels rebel; and their chief, who becomes God of the Jews, draws on that nation the hatred of all others by his arrogance. Egyptian Gnosticism thus bore the stamp of the old Egyptian pantheism, its every power emanating from the Unbegotten One; while the Asiatic systems embody in some form the Mazdean principle of two opposed powers, of which the worse is only ultimately to be defeated. Egyptian precedent explains also the

countless generations of the Gnostic systems of Alexandria. As in Egyptian history dynasty followed on dynasty, and as in the pantheon God was begotten of God, so in the system of Basilides the Unbegotten produces from himself *Nous*, Mind; which produces the *Logos*; which produces *Phronesis*, Judgment; which produces *Sophia* and *Dynamis*, Wisdom and Power; and these last in turn produce angels, who in turn reproduce others down to the 365th grade. The system of Valentinus, assigned to the period of Antoninus Pius, frames fresh complications, partly suggestive of an immemorial bureaucracy which had duplicated itself in the heavens, partly of an *à priori* psychology which sought to explain the universe, now by first principles, after the fashion of the early mythology of Rome, now by adaptations of the current theosophy.

In the hands of Valentinus religion becomes an imbroglio which only an expert could master; and the functions of the Christ in particular are a mere tangle of mystery. *Nous*, the first of many "Æons," is the "only begotten" Son, his mother being *Ennoia*, Thought; yet with him is born Truth; and these three with the Father make a first Tetrad. Then *Nous* produces the *Logos* and Life; which beget Man and the Church; which two pairs beget more Æons; and so on. In a later stage, after a "fall," *Nous* begets the Christos and the Holy Spirit; while later still the Æons produce the Æon Jesus, Sophia and Horos playing a part in the evolution. Such a maze, though it is said to have had many devotees, could not possibly be the creed of a popular Church, even in Egypt; and wherever the gospels went their ostensibly concrete Jesus held his own against such spectral competition.

The systems which made Jesus non-human and those which made of him an elusive abstraction were alike disadvantaged as against that which declared him to have been born of woman and to have suffered the last agony for the sons of men. Women could weep for the crucified Man-God as they had immemorially done for Adonis and Osiris: they could not shed tears for a phantasmagoric series of Nous—Logos—Christ —Æons—Jesus, begetting and begotten.

Other Gnostics, still making mystical pretensions, were content to represent Jesus as a superior human being born of Joseph and Mary in the course of nature. Carpocrates of Alexandria, who so taught in the reign of Hadrian, had a large following. Such tolerance of "materialism," however, brought on the sect charges of all manner of sensuality; and there is categorical record that, following Plato, they sought to practise community of women. Similarly the Basilidians were charged with regarding all bodily appetites as indifferent, their founder having set his face against the glorification of virginity, and taught that Jesus was not absolutely sinless, since God could never permit an innocent being to be punished. There is no proof, however, that any sect-founder was openly antinomian; and while license doubtless occurred in many, we have the evidence of the Pauline epistles that it could rise in the heart of the primitive Church as easily as in any sect. In the same way, whatever might be the doctrine of particular sections, it may be taken as certain that the charge of bowing before persecution, cast at some, held partly true of nearly all.

Systems such as the bulk of those above described, drawing as they did on any documents rather than

the Old and New Testaments, are obviously not so much Christian schisms as differentiations from historic Christianity—developments, in most cases, of an abstract Christism on lines not merely Gentile but based on Gentile religions, as against the Jewish. Broadly speaking, therefore, they tended to disappear from the Christist field, inasmuch as paganism had other deities better suited to the part of the Gnostic *Logos*. The intermediate type, bodiless at best, must die out. Gnosticism had not only no canon of its own, but no thought of one: while the fashion lasted, every decade saw a new system, refining on the last and multiplying its abstractions, till the very term *gnosis* must have become a byword. Success, as has been said above, must remain with the simple and concrete system, especially if that were organised; and the Gnostics of the second century attempted no general organisation. Yet Gnosticism left a lasting impress on Christianity. In its earlier stages, as we have seen, it modified the gospels; and after it had evolved away from the gospel basis it left an influence on the more philosophically-minded writers of the Church, notably Clement of Alexandria, who is as openly anxious to approve himself a "good Gnostic" as to found on the accepted sacred books of the Church. Deriving as it partly did from the Jewish Platonist Philo, it brought into the Church his fashion of reducing Biblical narratives to allegories—a course much resorted to not only by Origen but by Augustine, and very necessary for the defence of Hebrew tales against pagan criticism. Further, the regular practice of the Church in the matter of separating catechumens from initiates was an adoption of the Gnostic principle of esoteric knowledge.

In yet other ways, however, Gnosticism influenced early Christianity. It was the Gnostics who first set up in it literary habits: they were the first to multiply documents of all kinds; and it is not unlikely that their early additions to the gospels gave a stimulus to its expansion on other lines. They were, in short, the first to introduce a tincture of letters and art into the cult; and it was their spirit that shaped the fourth gospel, which gave to Christism the only philosophical elements it ever possessed. They are not indeed to be regarded as having cultivated philosophy to any good purpose, though they passed on some of the philosophic impulse to the later Platonists. Rather the average Gnostic is to be conceived as a leisured dilettante in an age of learned ignorance and foiled intelligence, lending an eager ear to new mysticisms, as so many half-cultured idlers are seen still doing in our own day. They cared as much for abracadabral amulets, apparently, as for theories; and their zeal for secret knowledge had in it something of the spirit of class exclusiveness, and even of personal arrogance. It would seem as if, when tyrannies in the ancient world made an end of the old moral distinctions of classes, men instinctively caught at new ways of being superior to their fellows—for the spirit of Gnosticism arose among the later Greek pagans, who here followed the lead of Egyptian priests, as well as among Samaritans and Grecised Jews. At most we may say of the Gnostics that they were much more concerned than the orthodox to frame a complete and consistent theistic theory of things, and that in their learned-ignorant way they sought to walk by reason as well as by faith. Necessarily they were in a minority. It was, however, their theoretic bent, surviving in the

gospel-reading Church, that determined the dogmatic development of the Christist creed. Their recoil from the conception of a Saviour-God in a human body comes out in the later debates and creeds as in the fourth gospel; and if the final doctrine of the Trinity be not truly Gnostic, it is because the Gnostics showed more concern for plausibility, and never aimed at tying thought down forever to a plainly self-contradictory formula. Much of their movement probably survived in Manichæism, which, though sufficiently dogmatic, never flaunted such propositions as those of the Nicene creed, and was a critical thorn in the flesh of the Church. Even their amulets seem to have had a Christian vogue; and the worship of angels, which began to flourish among Catholics in the fourth century, seems to have been a reflex of their teaching.

In some respects, finally, the modern Church has confusedly reverted to their view of a future state. While the "orthodox" Christians of the second century believed that souls at death went to the underworld, to be raised with the body for the approaching millennium, or thousand-years reign of Christ, the Gnostics, scouting the millennium as a grossly materialistic conception, held that at death the soul ascended to heaven. That appears to be the prevailing fancy among Protestants at the present day, though men have grown cautious of formal dicta on the subject.

§ 4. *Marcionism and Montanism.*

Apart from Gnosticism, the Church of the second century was affected by certain heretical or sectarian movements which centred round single teachers of

an influential sort, in particular Marcion of Sinope and Montanus, who became the founders of something like separate churches. Marcion, who was a disciple of the Gnostic Cerdo, and like him flourished in the reign of Antoninus Pius, held by some of the main Gnostic theories, but differed from the Gnostics in general in that he founded solely on New Testament writings and did not absolutely oppose Judaism. In his system the Supreme God, who is Good, creates a Demiurge or world-maker, who is merely Just or legalist, the God of the Jews; while Satan, the offspring of Matter, governs the heathens. Only the Christians are ruled by the Good God, who is first revealed to men solely by the Christ. It was in this way that he applied the Gnostic principle of "oppositions" or "antithesis," in a work bearing that title. His ethic appears to have been a sectarian version of that of Bardesanes, who had defined the good as those who did good even to the wicked; the just as those who did good only to the good; and the wicked as those who did evil even to the good. It does not seem to have occurred to Marcion that in classing all pagans as outside of the pale of goodness he was stultifying his own avowed principle of divine love and mercy; but in this respect at least he was not heretical, for all who bore the Christian name agreed in limiting salvation to Christists, and dooming all other men to hell-fire.

That he was a fanatic of exceptional force of character is proved by the facts that (1) it was he who forced on the Church the problem of a canon, he being the first to form one, by way, as he explained, of excluding Jewish documents and Jewish interpola-

tions in the gospel and the Pauline epistles; and that (2) he was able to form a separate organisation, which subsisted for centuries, with some variations in doctrine, alongside of the "catholic" Church, being heard of as late as the seventh century. The controversies he set up affected the whole literature of the Church for generations; and though it was a point of honour with the orthodox to accuse him of corrupting the texts as well as the faith, it is finally held that some of his readings of the third gospel, which he specially favoured, are really the original ones. Inasmuch, however, as he laid stress on asceticism, to the extent of prohibiting marriage, he necessarily failed to attract the multitude, though his was one of the influences which fostered ascetic ideas within the Church from his time onwards.

The movement of Montanus, known also as the Cataphrygian heresy, has two aspects—that of a sect founded by a zealot of strong personality, who felt that he had special inner light and claimed to be inspired by the Paraclete promised in the gospel, and that of a general reaction against officialism in the Church, somewhat in the spirit of the Quakers of the Reformation period. It stressed all the extremer social tendencies of the early Church, the prediction of the end of the world, the impropriety of marriage and child-bearing in prospect of the catastrophe, the multiplication of fasts, the absolute condemnation of second marriages, the renunciation of earthly joys in general. Christ, said Montanus, had withdrawn the indulgences granted by Moses; and through himself the Paraclete cancelled those given by Paul. Thus true religion, having had its infancy under Judaism, and its youth under the gospel, had reached maturity

under the Holy Spirit (an idea revived a thousand years later in Catholic Europe). Hardness of heart had reigned till Christ; weakness of flesh till the Paraclete. A special feature of the Montanist schism —which spread far, and ultimately absorbed Tertullian, who for a time had opposed it—was the association of the founder with two wealthy women of rank, Maximilla and Priscilla, who endowed the movement. It is noteworthy that this special growth of asceticism took its rise in Phrygia, one of the regions specially associated in pagan antiquity with sensuous and orgiastic worship. It would seem as if an age of indulgence led in natural course to a neurotic recoil. In any case it is neurosis that speaks in the ascetic polemic of Tertullian, who became a typical Montanist.

Montanism, it has been said, was "all but victorious"; but its victory was really impossible in the circumstances. It would have meant arresting the growth of Christism to the form of a State Church by depriving it of all popular attraction; and the vested interests were too great to permit of such a renunciation. The movement may be loosely compared to the secession of more rigid bodies from the relaxing sects of Methodism and Calvinism in our own time: voluntary austerity must always be in a minority. A Church which absolutely refused to retain or readmit any who committed a cardinal sin or lapsed during persecution—saying they might be saved by God's grace, but must not be allowed human forgiveness—was doomed to the background. But Montanism, appealing as it did to an ideal of holiness which the average Christian dared not repudiate, influenced the main body, especially through the writings of such a valued polemist as Tertullian, who

taunted them with being inferior even to many pagans in the matter of chastity and monogamy. The main body was not to be metamorphosed; but it read the lesson as inculcating the need for at least priestly celibacy. Every notable "heresy" so-called seems thus to have left its mark on the Church.

What above all is proved by the movements of Marcion and Montanus is the power of organisation in that period to maintain a sect with sacred books of any kind. They had learned the lesson taken from Judaism by the first Christists, and proceeded to show that just as organised Jesuism could live apart from Judaism in the Gentile field, so new Christist sects could live apart from the orthodox Church when once separation was forced on them. Montanism, like Marcionism, survived for centuries, and seems to have been at length suppressed only by violence on the part of the Christian emperors, who could persecute more effectually than pagans ever did, having the Church as an instrument. In the face of such developments, and still more in view of the later success of Manichæism, which, as we shall see, applied still better the principle of organisation, there can be no longer any difficulty in accounting for the rise of Christism on purely natural grounds. Given the recognition of a few essential conditions, the creation of a sect was a very simple and facile matter. Montanism and Manichæism successively endured as much persecution, pagan and Christian, as the Christian Church ever did; and it was only the essential unpopularity of the ideals of Montanism that permitted of its suppression as a sect even by the persecuting established Church. Manichæism, as we shall see, was almost insuppressible, even when

political changes had given the Church a power of centralisation and coercion which otherwise could never have been developed. At the end of the third century, in short, the Church of its own nature was rapidly approaching disruption into new and irreconcilable organisations.

§ 5. *Rites and Ceremonies.*

Apart from the habit of doctrinal discussion, derived from Judaism, the Christianity of the third century had distinctly become as much a matter of ritual and ceremonial as any of the older pagan cults. Churches built for worship, rare in the second century, had become common, and images had already begun to appear in them, while incense was coming into general use, despite the earlier detestation of it as a feature of idolatry. In the wealthier churches, gold and silver medals were often seen. Pagan example had proved irresistible in this as in other matters.

By this time, baptism and the eucharist had alike become virtual "mysteries," to which new-comers were initiated as in the pagan cults. Baptism was administered only twice a year, and then only to those who had undergone a long preparation. The first proceeding was a solemn exorcism, which was supposed to free the initiates from the power of the evil spirit or spirits. Then, after they had repeated a creed (which in the Western Churches had to be recited both in Greek and Latin, the Greek being in the nature of a magic formula) they were completely immersed, signed with the cross, prayed over, and touched ceremonially with the hands of the officiating

bishop or presbyter; finally they partook of milk and honey, and returned home decorated with a white robe and a crown.

The eucharist, commonly administered on Sundays, was regarded as absolutely necessary to salvation and resurrection; and on that account infants were made to partake of it, this before baptism had been declared to be essential in their case. Only the baptised were allowed to be present at the celebration; but portions of the consecrated bread and wine were taken away for sick members, and believed to have a curative virtue. The sign of the cross was now constantly used in the same spirit, being held potent against physical and spiritual evil alike, insofar as any such distinction was drawn. But diseases were commonly regarded as the work of evil spirits, and medical science was generally disowned, the preferred treatment being exorcism. A baptised person might further use the Lord's Prayer, with its appeal against the Evil One—a privilege denied to the catechumen or seeker for membership.

§ 6. *Strifes over Primary Dogma.*

The nucleus for a theistic-Christist creed, as we have seen, was given to the Church in the fourth gospel. The first Jewish Jesuists were simple Unitarians; and the Jesus of Paul, so far as can be safely inferred from epistles indefinitely interpolated, was certainly no part of a trinity in unity. At the beginning of the second century the "orthodox" Christists had no more definite theology than had the unlettered believers in any pagan Saviour-God; and at most

the gospels taught them to regard the supernaturally-born Christ as having ascended to heaven, to sit in visible form at the right hand of the Father, as Herakles or Dionysos or Apollo might sit by his Father Zeus. At the middle of the century Justin Martyr speaks of the Logos not as a personal form of deity, but as the inspiration given by God to men in different degrees at different times. It is after him that the fourth gospel begins to do its work. Christian apologists, deriding the beliefs of the pagans, had to meet the charge that they too were polytheists, and the old challenge: If the suffering Saviour were a man, why worship him? if he were a God, why weep for his sufferings?

An attempt to meet the difficulty was made in the heresy of Praxeas, a member of the Church who, coming from Asia to Rome late in the century, seems to have taught that the Son and the Holy Spirit were not distinct from the Father, but simply functions of the One God, the Father having descended into the Virgin and been born as Jesus Christ. At once he was accused of "making the Father suffer" on the cross, and his sect accordingly seem to have been among the first called *Patripassians*. In the same or the next century, Noëtus of Smyrna is found preaching the same doctrine; and in the hands of Sabellius of Libya, whose name was given to it by his opponents, the teaching became one of the most influential heresies of the age. Sabellius in fact formulated that theory of the Trinity which alone gives it formal plausibility: the three *personæ* were for him (as they could etymologically be in Latin and in the Greek term first used, *prosopon*) not persons, but aspects or modes of the deity, as power, wisdom, and goodness; or law,

mercy, and guidance—a kind of solution which in later times has captivated many theologians, including Servetus and Coleridge. But Sabellius, like his predecessors, had to meet the epithet of "Patripassian," and he appears to have parried it with the formula that only a certain energy proceeding from the Divine Nature had been united to the man Jesus. In the way of rationalising the irrational and giving consistency to contradictories, the Church could never do better than this. Under such a theorem, however, the Man-God as such theoretically disappeared; and as that was precisely the side of the creed which identified the cult, gave it popularity, and won it revenue, Sabellianism, though accepted by many, even by many bishops, could not become the official doctrine. It persistently remained, nevertheless, in the background, the idea taking new forms and names in succeeding generations, as new men arose with courage and energy enough to reopen the insoluble strife, during a period of four hundred years.

A solution by a different approach was offered by such second-century teachers as Theodotus of Byzantium, a learned tanner living in Rome; another of the same name, a banker; and Artemon, all founders of sects by whom Jesus was regarded as merely a superior man, supernaturally born. As this form of the Unitarian doctrine struck directly at the essential element of the Christ's deity, in respect of which the cult vied with others of the same type, it was no more generally acceptable than the Sabellian; and it is more than likely that the mere *odium theologicum* gave rise to the story that Theodotus had first denied Christ under persecution, and then framed a theology for his predicament. Yet such doctrines as his must have

gone on gaining ground among the more stirring minds; for when in the next century Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch, began to restate the Unitarian thesis, he found an extensive following. The Logos, he taught, was not a person distinct from the Father, but merely his wisdom, which descended into but was not united with Jesus. Given forth about the year 260, Paul's teaching was condemned by a council at Antioch in 264, he giving a promise of "reformation" which he did not keep. Another council, which met in 269 or 270, deposed and excommunicated him; but he refused to obey, and Queen Zenobia of Palmyra, who then ruled Antioch, protected him. Not till 272, when Antioch was retaken by Aurelian, did the majority succeed in ousting him, by the emperor's express intervention. And still the "heresy" persisted, and the theological hatreds grew. It belonged to the nature of the religion, a pyramid poised on its apex, to be in unstable equilibrium wherever any breath of reason could blow.

The development of the councils in the third century is a proof at once of the growth of organisation in the Church and of the need for it. It is not to be supposed that all orthodox Churchmen looked practically to the main chance; it is clear, on the contrary, that many were moved by the conservative zeal of the Bibliolater of all ages, as the heretics were presumably moved by a spirit of reason; but the bishops must at all times have included many who looked at questions of creed from the standpoint of finance, like so many members of modern political parties; and they would be apt to turn the scale in every serious dispute. Even they, however, with whatever aid from polemical propaganda, could not

long have availed to preserve anything like a preponderating main body if the Church were left to itself. The polemical writers, broadly speaking, converted nobody, but merely inflamed those already convinced; and party strife was becoming more and more comprehensive, more furious, more menacing, when the Church was saved from itself by the State.

CHAPTER II.

RELATIONS OF CHURCH AND STATE.

§ 1. *Persecutions.*

It was involved in the aggressive attitude of the Christist movement that it should be persecuted by countervailing fanaticism. The original bias of all ancient religion, indeed, in virtue of the simple self-interest of priesthoods, had been to resent and suppress any new worship; and though nowhere else is the course so ferociously enjoined as in the Hebrew sacred books, there are many traces of it in the pagan world. Thus the Dionysiak cult had been violently resisted on its introduction into Greece; and the early Roman law against foreign worships was turned against it, under circumstances plainly exaggerated by Livy, about 187 B.C. Later, a religious panic led to the official suppression in Rome of the worships of Isis and Serapis. Empire, however, everywhere involved some measure of official toleration of diverging cults; and as in Babylon and Egypt, so under the Hellenistic and Roman systems, the religions of each of the provinces were more or less assimilated in all. When even early Athens had been constrained to permit the non-aggressive cults of the aliens within her walls, far-reaching empires could do no less. Indeed, the very vogue of Christism depended on the fact that throughout the empire there was taking place a new

facility of belief in strange Gods. There can be no more complete mistake than the common assertion that it made its appeal in virtue of the prevalence of "desolating scepticism." On the contrary, rationalism had practically disappeared; and even the Roman pagans most adverse to Christism were friendly to other new cults.

Had the Christian cult been, like its non-Jewish contemporaries, a mere effort to "worship God according to conscience," it need not have undergone pagan persecution any more than they, or than Judaism, save when the State imposed the duty of worshipping the emperor's statue. A God the more was no scandal to polytheists. Christism had taken from Judaism, however, as a first principle, the detestation of "idols," and its propaganda from the first had included a violent polemic against them. For the Christians, the pagan Gods were not unrealities: they were evil dæmons, constantly active. Insofar, too, as the first Jesuists in the western part of the empire shared the Jewish hatred for Rome that is expressed in the Apocalypse, they were likely enough to provoke Roman violence. A constant prediction of the speedy passing away of all things was in itself a kind of sedition; and when joined with contumely towards all other religions it could not but rouse resentment. Thus, though the story of the great Neronian massacre is, as already noted, an apparent fiction as regards the Christians, being unnoticed in the book of Acts, Jesuists and Jews alike ran many chances of local or general hostility under the empire from the first. The express doctrines, put in the mouth of the founder, that he had come to bring not peace but a sword, and to create strife in families, were not fitted

to soften the prejudices aroused by the religious claims of the new faith; and in the time of Tertullian they were defined in the west as "enemies of the Gods, of the emperors, of the laws, of morals, and of all nature."

According to Tertullian, writing under Severus or Caracalla, only the bad emperors had persecuted the Church. But its danger had always lain less in special imperial edicts than in the ordinary bearing of the laws against secret societies and nocturnal worships, and in the ordinary tendency of ignorant and priest-led fanaticism to a panic of cruelty in times of popular distress or alarm. An earthquake or pestilence was always apt to be visited on the new "atheists" as provokers of the Gods. The mere habit of midnight worship, which is one of the proofs that early Jesuism was in some way affiliated to sun-worship, was a ground for suspicion; but as Mithraism was freely tolerated in spite of its nocturnal rites, Christism might have been, but for its other provocations. And even these were for long periods ignored by the Government. If the often-quoted letter of Pliny to Trajan (about the year 100) be genuine, it proves an official disposition to protect the Christians, when politically innocent, from fanatical attacks; and Tertullian, who speaks of such a letter, credits Marcus Aurelius with limiting the scope of the laws which tended to injure the sect, though we know from Marcus himself that Christians suffered death. By common consent, though there was certainly much random persecution in the first three centuries, the formula of "ten persecutions" is fabulous; and that ascribed to Domitian is hardly better established than that ascribed to Nero. That the Christists suffered specially as tradition asserts in the reign of Hadrian, when

the Jews were specially hated because of their last desperate revolt, is probable; but Hadrian gave no general orders, and is credited like the Antonines with shielding the new sectaries. It is finally very doubtful whether any ordained and legalised persecution of Christians ever took place save (1) in Egypt under Severus, who at first and afterwards was friendly; (2) on a small scale under Maximinus; (3) in the east under Decius and (4) under Valerian; and (5) throughout the empire under Diocletian and his colleagues (from 303 to 311). These episodes occurred within a period of little over a hundred years.

In all periods alike, from the end of the first century down to Constantine, there was no doubt much random cruelty. The letter from the Churches of Vienne and Lyons, cited by Eusebius, and assigned to the year 161, is a doubtful document; but the savageries there described were only too possible. Public cruelty seems to have worsened in the very period in which the inhabitants of cities had become most unused to war, and the finer minds had grown most humane: like the other animal instincts, it had grown neurotic in conditions of vicious idleness, and many men had become virtuosi in cruelty as in lust. The Christian gospel itself now held up "the tormentors" as typical of the processes of divine punishment; and torture was for many an age to be a part of Christian as of pagan legal procedure.

Insofar as persecution was legalised, it is to be understood not as a putting down of a new religious belief, but as an attack on its political and social side. In the case, for instance, of Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, who after a flight and a banishment was put to death under Valerian and Gallienus (258), the

bishop's far-reaching activities are the presumptive reason for his fate. It is to be remembered, as Gibbon notes, that in ten years of Cyprian's tenure of office four emperors themselves died by the sword, with their families and their adherents. At times, no doubt, the attack on Christians was unprovoked, consisting as it might in a challenge to a Christian to swear allegiance by or sacrifice to the statue of the emperor, when he was willing to swear by his own creed. The public worship of the emperor was the one semblance of a centralised religious organisation which, like that of the Christian Church, existed throughout the empire. Precedented by old Egyptian and eastern usage, and by the practice of Alexander and his successors, it had first appeared in Rome in the offer of the cringing senate to deify Julius Cæsar, and in the systematic measures of Augustus to have Julius worshipped as a God (*divus*), an honour promptly accorded to himself in turn. The apotheosis was signalised by giving the names of Julius and Augustus to the months Quintilis and Sextilis; and only the final unpopularity of Tiberius prevented the substitution of his name in turn for that of September, an honour offered to and refused by him in his earlier life. Some of the madder emperors later tried to carry on the process of putting themselves in the calendar, but were duly disobeyed after death. Detested emperors, such as Tiberius and Nero and Domitian, were even refused the apotheosis; but in general the title of *divus* was freely accorded, so abject had the general mind grown under autocracy; and it was usual in the provinces to worship the living emperor in a special temple in association with the Genius of Rome; while the cults of some emperors lasted long after their death. The common sense as

well as the sense of humour of some rulers led them to make light of the institution; and the jest of the dying Vespasian, "I fancy I am turning God," is one of several imperial witticisms on the subject; but it lay in the nature of autocracy, in Rome as in Egypt or in Incarian Peru, to employ sagaciously all methods of abasing the human spirit, so as to secure the safety of the throne. One of the most obvious means was to deify the emperor—a procedure as "natural" in that age as the deification of Jesus, and depending on the same psychological conditions. And though the person of the emperor was seldom quite safe from assassination by his soldiery, the imperial cult played its part from the first in establishing the fatal ideal of empire. No sequence of vileness or incompetence in the emperors, no impatience of the insecurity set up by the power of the army to make and unmake the autocrat, no experience of the danger of a war of claimants, ever seems to have made Romans dream of a saner and nobler system. Manhood had been brought too low.

Imperialism being thus an official religion in itself, the cult of the emperor lay to the hands of any magistrate who should be disposed to put a test to a member of the sect which decried all established customs and blasphemed all established Gods. It was the recognised way of imposing the oath of allegiance apart from any specific law. Where such a procedure was possible, any malicious pagan might bring about a stedfast Christian's death. There is Christian testimony, however, that many frenzied believers brought martyrdom wilfully on themselves by outrages on pagan temples and sacred statues; and it is Tertullian who tells how Arrius Antoninus, pro-

consul in Asia, drove from him a multitude of frantic fanatics seeking death, with the amazed demand whether they had not ropes and precipices. The official temper evidently varied, as did that of the Christians. In the period before Diocletian, save for the intrigues of pagan priests and provincial demagogues, and the normal suspicions of autocratic power, there was nothing in the nature of a general and official animosity, though the Christian attitude was always unconciliatory enough. But by the beginning of the fourth century the developments on both sides had created a situation of strain and danger. The great effort of Diocletian to give new life to the vast organism of the empire, first by minute supervision, and then by subdivision under two emperors and two Cæsars, wrought a certain seriousness of political interest throughout the bureaucracy; and the Christian body, long regarded with alternate contempt and dislike, had become so far organised and so considerable a force that none who broadly considered the prospects of the State could avoid reckoning with it. At the same time paganism had taken on new guises: the Neo-Platonists, so-called, restated the ancient mythology and theology in forms which compared very well with the abstract teaching of the Church; and among the educated class there was some measure of religious zeal against Christians as blasphemers of other men's Gods. It may or may not have needed the persuasion of his anti-Christian colleague, the Cæsar Galerius, to convince such a ruler as Diocletian that the Christian Church, a growing State within the State, still standing by an official doctrine of a speedy world's-end, and rejecting the cult of the emperor, was an incongruous and dangerous element

in the imperial scheme. It was in fact a clear source of political weakness, though not so deadly a one as the autocracy itself. To seek to suppress it, accordingly, was almost a natural outcome of Diocletian's ideal of government. He had sought to give a new air of sanctity to the worship of the emperor by calling himself *Jovius* and his colleague Maximian *Herculius;* and to make the effort succeed, it might well seem necessary to crush the one cult that directly stood in the way, alike as a creed and as an organisation. The refusal of some Christian soldiers, too, to submit to certain commands which they considered unlawful, gave Galerius a special pretext for strong measures.

It is not to be forgotten that the emperors and the bureaucracy had some excuse for a policy of suppression in the bitter strifes of the Christian sects and sections. Eusebius confesses that these were on the verge of actual warfare, bishop against bishop and party against party, each seeking for power; and for all it was a matter of course to accuse opponents of the worst malpractices. Some of the darkest charges brought by the pagans against Christians in general were but distributions of those brought by the orthodox against heretics, and by Montanists and others against the orthodox. A credulous pagan might well believe that all alike carried on vile midnight orgies, and deserved to be refused the right of meeting. It is not probable, however, that the two emperors and the persecuting Cæsar proceeded on any concern for private morals; and though Galerius was a zealous pagan with a fanatical mother, the motive of the persecution was essentially political. What happened was that the passions of the zealots

among the pagans had now something like free scope; and, unless the record in Eusebius is sheer fable, the work was often done with horrible cruelty. On the other hand, there is Christian testimony to the humanity of many of the better pagans, who sheltered their Christian friends and relatives; and the Cæsar Constantius Chlorus, a tolerant pagan, who ruled in Gaul and Britain and Spain, gave only a formal effect to the edict of the emperors, destroying churches and sacred books, but sparing their owners. The fact, finally, that in ten years of persecution the number of victims throughout the eastern and central empire appears to have been within two thousand, goes to suggest that the mass of the Christians either bowed to the storm or eluded it. Bitter discussions, reviving some of the previous century, rose afterwards as to the proper treatment of the *traditores*, those who surrendered and forswore themselves; and the more zealous sects and churches either imposed long penances or refused to receive back the lapsed. As the latter course would only weaken themselves, the majority of the churches combined policy with penalty.

The time was now at hand when the Church, from being an object of aversion to the autocracy, was to become its instrument. Just before his death in 311, Galerius, who was little of a statesman, began to see what Diocletian would doubtless have admitted had he lived much longer, and what Constantius Chlorus had probably suggested to his colleagues, that the true policy for the government was to adopt instead of crushing the Christian organisation. Only the original anticivism of the cult, probably, had prevented a much earlier adoption of this view by the more politic emperors. It was the insistence on the

imminent end of the world, the preaching of celibacy, the disparagement of earthly dignitaries, the vehement assault on the standing cults of the State, no less than the refusal to sacrifice to the emperor's statue, that had so long made Christism seem the natural enemy of all civil government. The more the Church grew in numbers and wealth, however, the more its bishops and priests tended to conform to the ordinary theory of public life; and as theirs was now the only organisation of any kind that reached throughout the State, save the State itself and the cult of the emperors, the latter must evidently either destroy it or adopt it. The great persecution, aiming at the former end, served only to show the futility of official persecution for such a purpose, since pagans themselves helped to screen staunch Christians, and the weaker had but to bow before the storm. Already Constantine, acting with a free hand on his father's principles, had given complete tolerance to the Christians under his sway; and Maxentius, struggling with him for the mastery of the West, had done as much. Even in the East, Maximin had alternately persecuted and tolerated the Christians as he had need to press or pacify Galerius. The language used by Galerius, finally, in withdrawing the edict of persecution, suggests that besides recognising its failure he had learned from his opponents to conceive the possibility of attaching to the autocracy a sect so much more widely organised and so much more zealous than any of the other subsisting popular religions, albeit still numbering only a fraction of the whole population.

To many of the Christians, on the other hand, long persecution had doubtless taught the wisdom of

recanting the extremes of doctrine which had made even sceptical statesmen regard them as a danger to any State. It is clear that bishops like Eusebius of Cæsarea would readily promise to the government a loyal attention to its interests in the event of its tolerating and befriending the Church; and the sacred books offered texts for any line of public action. The empire, always menaced by barbarism on its frontiers, needed every force of union that could be used within; and here, finally adaptable to such use, was the one organisation that acted or was fitted to act throughout the whole. To the leading churchmen, finally, association with the State was the more welcome because on the one hand general persecution would cease, and on the other all the party leaders could hope to be able by the State's means to put down their opponents. A generation before, in the year 272, the Emperor Aurelian, on the express appeal of the party of bishops who had deposed Paul of Samosata, had intervened in that quarrel to give effect to the will of the majority, which otherwise could not have been put in force; and such occasions were sure to arise frequently. It needed only another innovating emperor to bring about the coalition thus prepared.

§ 2. *Establishment and Creed-Making.*

On the abdication of the co-emperors Diocletian and Maximian, the Cæsars, Galerius and Constantius Chlorus, became the Augusti, the former, as senior, taking the East, and the latter the West. At once the plans of Diocletian began to miscarry; and Galerius, instead of raising to the Cæsarship, as the

other had wished, Maxentius the son of Maximian and Constantine the already distinguished son of Constantius, gave the junior titles to his nephews Severus and Maximin. The speedy death of Constantius, however, secured the election of Constantine to the purple by his father's troops in Britain; and there ensued the manifold strifes which ended in Constantine's triumph. Maxentius, and his father, who returned to power, put down Severus; and Maximian gave his daughter as wife to Constantine, thus creating a state of things in which three emperors were leagued against a fourth and one Cæsar. Soon Maximian and Maxentius quarrelled, the father taking refuge first with Constantine and later with Galerius; who, however, proceeded to create yet another emperor, Licinius. Immediately the Cæsar Maximin revolted, and forced Galerius to make him Augustus also. The old Maximian in the meantime went to league himself afresh with Constantine, who, finding him treacherous, had him strangled. Soon after, Galerius dying (in 311), Maximin and Licinius joined forces; while Maxentius, who held Italy and Africa, professing to avenge his father, declared war on Constantine, who held Gaul. The result was the defeat and death of the former, leaving Constantine master of the whole West (312). In 314 he fell out with Licinius, who had in the meantime destroyed Maximin, and won from him Illyrium, Macedonia, and Greece. For twelve years thereafter Constantine divided the empire with Licinius; then, quarrelling afresh with his rival, he captured and strangled him, and was sole autocrat (324).

Out of this desperate drama emerged Christianity as the specially favoured cult of the Roman empire.

Constantine, we saw, had protected the Christians from the first, as his father had done before him; and Licinius had acquiesced in the same policy, though in his final war with Constantine he persecuted the Christians in order to attach pagans to his cause. There has been much discussion, nevertheless, as to whether Constantine turned Christian on political or on religious grounds. The fact seems to be that, in the ordinary spirit of ancient religion, he trusted to have the support of the God of the Christians in his great struggle with Maxentius, who appealed to the Gods of paganism with old and evil rites; and that after his first great success he became more and more confirmed in his choice. The story, however, of his having the *labarum* presented to him in a dream or a vision is an obvious fiction, possible only to the ignorance of the first Christian historians, who read the Greek letters Χρ (Chr)—though the tradition ran that the accompanying words, "In this sign conquer," were in Latin—in a solar symbol that had appeared on Egyptian and other coins many centuries before, and had no reference whatever to the name of Christ, though Constantine used it for that on his standards. A similar tale is told of his son Constantius, on whose coins, however, the symbol is associated with the pagan Goddess of Victory. For the rest, Constantine was a Christian like another. His father had been a monotheist, who protected the Christians on philosophical principles; and from the constant success of Constantius in all his undertakings, as compared with the ill fortune of his own rivals, the son argued that the religion of "One God" was propitious to his house. His personal success in war was always his main argument for the Christian creed, and in such

an age it was not the least convincing. The fact that he postponed his baptism till shortly before his death is not to be taken as indicating any religious hesitations on his part. Multitudes of Christians in that age did the same thing, on the ground that baptism took away all sin, and that it was bad economy to receive it early. In his case such a reason was specially weighty, and there is no reason to suppose that he had any other. Since, however, the pagans still greatly outnumbered the Christians, he could not afford to declare definitely against all other cults; and, beginning by decreeing toleration for all, he kept the pagan title of *pontifex maximus*, and continued through the greater part of his life to issue coins or medals on which he figured as the devotee of Apollo or Mars or Herakles or Mithra or Zeus.

While, however, he thus propitiated other Gods and worshippers, he gave the Christians from the first a unique financial support. Formerly, the clergy in general had been wont to supplement their monthly allowances by trading, farming, banking, by handicraft, and by practising as physicians; but the emperor now enacted that they should have regular annual allowances, and that the church's widows and virgins should be similarly supported. Further, not only did he restore the possessions taken from believers during the persecution, he enacted that all their priests, like those of Egypt and of the later empire in general, should be exempt from municipal burdens; a step as much to their interest as it was to the injury of the State and of all public spirit. The instant effect was to draw to the priesthood multitudes of gain-seekers; the churches of Carthage and Constantinople soon had 500 priests apiece;

and so strong were the protests of the municipalities against the financial disorder he had created that Constantine was fain to restrict his decree. Certainly pagan flamens and public priests of the provinces, a restricted class, had had the same privilege, and this he maintained for them despite Christian appeals; nor does he seem to have withdrawn it from the priests and elders of the Jewish synagogues, who had also enjoyed it; but his direct gifts to the churches were considerable, and by permitting them to receive legacies in the manner of the pagan temples he established their financial basis. So great was their gain that laws had to be passed limiting the number of the clergy; and from this time forward laws were necessary to restrain priests and bishops from further enriching themselves by lending at interest. Clerical power was still further extended. Bishops, who had hitherto acted as arbitrators in Christian disputes, had their decisions legally enforced; and the important legal process of freeing slaves was transferred from the temples to the churches. Some pagan temples he temporarily suppressed, on moral grounds; some he allowed to be destroyed as no longer in use; but though he built and richly endowed several great Christian churches and passed some laws against pagan practices, he never ventured on the general persecution of pagans which his Christian hangers-on desired; and the assertions of Eusebius as to his having plundered the temples and brought paganism into contempt are among the many fictions —some of them perhaps later forgeries—in the works of that historian. As it was, Christian converts were sufficiently multiplied. Constantine's severest measures were taken against private divination, the practisers

of which he ordered to be burnt alive; but here he acted on the standing principles of pagan law, and doubtless under the usual autocratic fear of sooth-saying against himself. The measure of course had no effect on popular practice. The emperors themselves usually consulted diviners before their own accession; and their veto on divination for other people was not impressive.

It is in his relations to his chosen church, code, and creed that Constantine figures at his worst. In the year after his victory over Licinius, when a doubly convinced Christian, he put to death his son Crispus, a nephew, and his wife, Fausta; and he had strangled Licinius and *his* son after promising to preserve their lives; but not a word of censure came from the Christian clergy. At one stroke, their whole parade of superior morality was gone; and the church thenceforth was to be as zealous a sycophant of thrones as the priests of the past had ever been. Constantine lived without rebuke the ordinary life of autocrats; and by the admission of his episcopal panegyrist he was surrounded by worthless self-seekers, Christians all. Such as he was, however, Constantine was joyfully accepted as head of the Church on earth. His creation of the new capital, Constantinople, was regarded as the beginning of a new era, that of Christianity; since the upper classes of Rome were the most zealous devotees of the old Gods, and were said to have received Constantine on his last visit with open disrespect. Remaining *pontifex maximus*, he presided over the Œcumenical Council of the Church; and one of the abuses he established was to put the entire imperial postal service, with its relays of horses and chariots, at the service of the bishops travelling to attend them.

For all his efforts he had the reward of seeing them quarrel more and more furiously over their central dogmas and over questions of discipline. Under his eyes there arose the great schism of Arius, and the schism of the Donatists in Africa, both destined to deepen and worsen for many generations. The failure of the Church as a means of moral union becomes obvious once for all as soon as the act of establishment has removed the only previous restraining force on Christian quarrels, fear of the pagan enemy. Clerical revenues being mostly local, schism was still no economic disadvantage to any sectary; and the Christian creed availed as little to overrule primary instincts of strife as to provide rational tests for opinion or action.

It would seem as if whatever mental impulse were left in men must needs run in the new channels opened up for ignorant energy by ecclesiasticism and theology in that world of deepening ignorance and waning civilisation. Literature as such was vanishing; art was growing more impotent reign by reign; and the physical sciences, revived for a time in their refuge at Alexandria by the Antonines and Flavians, were being lost from the hands of the living. To attribute the universal decadence to Christianity would be no less an error than the old falsism that it was a force of moral regeneration: it was an effect rather than a cause of the general lapse. But, once established as part of the imperial machinery, it hastened every process of intellectual decay; and under such circumstances moral gain could not be. A doctrine of blind faith could not conceivably save a world sinking through sheer lack of light.

To Constantine, the endless strifes of the clergy

over their creeds were as unintelligible as they were insoluble. Like the centurion of the gospel story, wont to command and to be obeyed, he looked for discipline in divine things; and as the theological feud became more and more embroiled he passed from uneasiness to a state between fear and rage. The *Divinitas*, he protested, would be turned against all, clergy and emperor and laity alike, if the clergy would not live at peace; and he quaintly besought them to leave points of theory alone, or else to imitate the pagan philosophers, who could debate without hatred. The ever-quarrelling Church was becoming a laughing-stock to the Pagans, being derided in the very theatres; and its new converts could be those only who went wherever there was chance of gain. So, in one of his rages, he decreed murderous punishments against intractable schismatics, only to find that the menace multiplied the offence. Such as it was, however, the Church was an instrument of autocratic organisation not to be dispensed with; and thus, at the stage at which its theological impulses, unchecked by sane moral feeling, would in the absence of persecution by the State have rent it in mutually destroying factions, the official protection of the State in turn came in to hold it together as a nominal unity. Thus and thus did the organism survive—by anything rather than moral vitality or intellectual virtue.

Leaving to the councils the settlement or unsettlement of dogmas, the emperor took upon himself, to the great satisfaction of the clergy, the whole external administration of the Church, assimilating it to his body politic. The four leading bishoprics—Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, and Constantinople—were put on a level with the four prætorian prefectures; under

them were ecclesiastical exarchs, corresponding to the thirteen civil exarchs of given territories or dioceses; and next came metropolitans or archbishops who superintended the single provinces, 116 in all. In the next century, the Bishop of Jerusalem, formerly subject to Antioch, became independent; and those five sees became known as the five Patriarchates. Numbers of churches still remained for various reasons technically independent; but the natural effect of the whole system was to throw all authority upwards, the bishops overriding the presbyters, and all seeking to limit the power of the congregations to interfere. As the latter would now include an increasing number of indifferentists, the development was the more easy. On the side of external ceremony, always the gist of the matter for the majority, as well as in myth and theory, Christianity had now assimilated nearly every pagan attraction: baptism, as aforesaid, was become a close copy of an initiation into pagan mysteries, being celebrated twice a year by night with a blaze of lights; and when Constantine enacted that the Day of the Sun should be treated as specially holy, he was merely bracketing together pagan and Christian theology, the two sanctions being equally involved. It was of course not a sacred day in the modern Puritan sense, being simply put on a level with the other great festival days of the State, on which no work was done, but play was free.

It was in the year after his attainment of the sole power that Constantine summoned a General Council at his palace of Nicæa in Bithynia (325), to settle the theological status of the founder of the Church. The question had been ostensibly decided as against Paul of Samosata and the Sabellians (who made the Son a

mere manifestation or aspect of the Father) by the dictum that they were different persons. That was for the time orthodox dogma. When, however, Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria, declared as against his bishop that "the Son is totally and essentially distinct from the Father," the trouble began afresh. Arius found many adherents, who accused the bishop of Sabellianising when he affirmed that the Son and the Father were of the same essence; and the Church saw itself once more driven to define its God. Bishop Alexander had Arius cast out of the Church by two Alexandrian Councils, with the effect of driving him to a more zealous propaganda, which succeeded as promptly and as widely as any previous heresy. Thereupon the Council of Nicæa, by a majority vote, enacted that the Son was of the same essence (*homoousios*) with the Father, yet a different person, and one with yet born of the Father; a creed to that effect was framed; Arius was sent into exile; and the leading bishops on his side were deposed. It was a mere snatch vote by a packed jury, since only some 300 bishops were present, whereas the Church contained at least 1,800; and five years afterwards Constantine, who on his own part had ordered that the writings of Arius should be burned, yet expressed himself as an ultra-Arian, became persuaded that the heresiarch had been ill-used, and recalled him from exile. Thereupon the restored Arian bishops began to persecute their persecutors; and Athanasius, the new bishop of Alexandria, having refused to reinstate Arius, *he* in turn was deprived of his office by the Council of Tyre (335) and banished to Gaul, other depositions following; while a large council held at Jerusalem formally restored the Arians; and the

emperor commanded the bishop of Constantinople to receive the heresiarch. Before this could be done, however, Arius died at Constantinople (336), apparently by poison, and Constantine died the year after, baptised by an Arian bishop, leaving the two parties at grips for their long wrestle of hate. Within a few years, the emperor's son Constans was threatening to make war on his brother Constantine if he did not reinstate Athanasius.

No vainer dispute had ever convulsed any society. As an ecclesiastical historian has remarked, both parties believed in salvation through the blood of Jesus: on this primitive dogma, inherited from prehistoric barbarism, there was no dispute: and the battle was over the hopeful point of "assigning him that rank in the universe which properly belonged to him." Orthodoxy would have it that the Son was Son from all eternity—exactly, once more, as devout Brahmans and Moslems have maintained that the Vedas and the Koran were "uncreated," and existed from all eternity. Man's instinct of reverence seems to lead mechanically to such conceptions in the absence of critical thought. But the thought, on the other side, which made Jesus a God born in time, and *homoiousios* (of *similar* essence) with the Father, was only relatively saner. Thus the Arians, rational in one aspect, took their stand on a fundamental irrationality; while the Trinitarians, as represented by Athanasius, found a sufficient substitute for argument in boundless vituperation. The fact that the Arians opposed monasticism and the ideal of perpetual virginity served to heighten orthodox resentment. The hatred was beyond all measure, and can be accounted for only by recognising that a creed which appeals

to emotion and degrades reason is potentially the worst stimulant of evil passions. On the intellectual side, if it can be said to have had one, the theory of the Trinity was a simple appropriation by Christianity of the conception of divine Triads which prevailed in the old Egyptian system; and of which the Trinity of Osiris, Isis, and Horus was a well-known instance. Athanasius was but adding Christian passion to yet another pagan theorem, assimilated on Gnostic lines, with a new stress laid on the verbal affirmation of monotheism. The one quasi-rational argument applicable to the case would be the non-moral one that the cult was visibly between the Scylla of polytheism and the Charybdis of a monotheism which reduced Jesus to mere manhood; and that if a nakedly self-contradictory formula could preserve it from collapse on either side such a formula should be enacted. Such an argument was of course not put forward, but probably it appealed to some of the shrewder and less honest bishops, who in the ensuing strifes would nevertheless adapt themselves to the political urgency of the moment. The State had happily created a species of official integument, within which the warring members remained nominally one church. Within that superficies the chaos became indescribable. The Arians in their turn broke up into half-a-dozen mutually anathematising sects, each brandishing a creed; and every new phase of heresy evoked orthodox rejoinders which in turn were found to be heresies in the other direction. On the first series of strifes followed a second, as to the manner of the combination of the divine and human natures in Jesus; with yet a third, over the personality or modality of the Holy Ghost;

till theology had become a kind of systematic insanity.

While Egypt and the East were thus embroiled, northern Africa, "orthodox" on the Trinity, was being given up to the schism of the Donatists, one of the many outbreaks of the Puritan or ascetic instinct there, where of old had flourished some of the most sensual worships. The quarrel began over the election of a bishop of Carthage, and the puritan side received its title from one or both of two bishops named Donatus. Council after council failed to compose the feud; and the emperor fared no better when he took from the schismatics some of their temples, banished some of their bishops, and put numbers to death. In the year 330 one of their councils numbered 270 bishops; and still the schism went on growing. Any sect, it was clear, might grow as the Jesuist sect itself had done. Alongside of the others now rose yet a new movement, that of Manichæaus or Manes, a Persian, who combined in Gnostic fashion the Christian scheme and that of Mazdean dualism, identifying Jesus with Mithra; and this cult in turn, being carefully organised, spread fast and far, flourishing all the more after Manes had been put to death by the Persian king as a heretic to Mazdeism (? 275). It had a president, representing Christ; twelve masters, representing the twelve apostles; and seventy-two bishops, representing the seventy-two apostles of the third gospel or the seventy-two travelling collectors of the Jewish patriarchs. Like most of the earlier Gnostics the Manichæans were "Docetists," holding that Jesus had only a seeming body and could not really suffer; and they not only denounced the Old Testament, calling Jehovah the Evil Spirit, but rejected the four gospels in favour of

a new one, called Erteng, which Manes affirmed had been dictated to him by God. Improving on Montanus, he claimed to be the promised Paraclete; thus beginning a new cultus on all fours with the Christist. On the side of ethics the new cult extolled and professed all the ascetic virtues, and held by a theory of a twofold purgatory, one of sacred water in the moon, and one of sacred fire in the sun, which burned away the impure body, leaving an immortal spirit. With its independent gospel, Manichæism had all the popular vitality of Montanism with the intellectual pretensions of Gnosticism. Nothing, it was clear, could hinder the creation of new sects out of or alongside the main body; and nothing but the most systematic and destructive persecution could prevent their separate continuance while zeal subsisted.

Under the family of Constantine his creed and his policy were maintained, with no better fruits under either the personal or the political aspect. To his three sons — Canstantine II., Constantius, and Constans—with two of his nephews, he left the empire; but immediately the nephews were massacred with their fathers; of the three sons the second destroyed the first in war (340); and the third, succeeding to the western provinces of the first, fell in war with a new competitor, Magnentius (350); whereafter Constantius, defeating the latter by deputy, became sole emperor (353–361). To him appears to be chargeable the deliberate assassination at one stroke of the two surviving brothers of his father and all their sons save two, Gallus and Julian, the sons of Julius Constans; and at his hands began at least the theoretical persecution of paganism on the eager pressure of the church which forty years

before had been persecuted. It thus remains matter of history that while many pagans had been in favour of tolerance before the establishment of Christianity, the Christians, who had naturally condemned all persecution while they suffered from it, were ready to become zealous persecutors as soon as they had the power. The treatise of Julius Firmicus Maternus on pagan errors is an eager appeal to the sons of Constantine to destroy all pagan worships. In point of fact, pagans were not the first to suffer. Excommunications, banishments, and executions of schismatics had been among the first fruits of Constantine's headship; and though for a time many recoiled from putting to death their heretical fellow-Christians, within a century that scruple too had disappeared. Thus again was "the Church" enabled to survive.

Christian persecution of paganism, on the other hand, did not take effect as promptly as its instigators would seem to have wished. In 341, Constans made an absurd law that "superstition should cease, and the madness of sacrifices be abolished," on pain of death to all who persisted. No official action seems to have been taken under this decree; and next year, being doubtless forced to respect the pagan party, he enacted that though superstition must be suppressed the old temples should be spared. In 353, Constantius in turn appears from the Theodosian Code to have decreed that all temples throughout the empire should be closed; that all who resorted to them or offered sacrifice should be put to death, and their property confiscated; and that governors who did not enforce the law should themselves be so punished. In the same year he ostensibly struck at nocturnal pagan rites at Rome, where Christian rites had so long been

nocturnal. Three years later, when Julian had become Cæsar under him, he framed a law, signed by both, which in a few words reaffirms the death penalty on all who sacrificed, or worshipped idols—this when some Christians were already worshipping idols in their churches. As there is no trace whatever of any official action being taken under these laws, and as there is abundant monumental proof that at least in the western empire and in Egypt the pagan worships were carried on freely as before, we are forced to conclude that the edicts, if really penned, were never given out by Constantius. It remains on record that he, keeping the pagan title of *pontifex maximus*, passed stringent laws, as Constans had done, against all who desecrated pagan tombs; and further that he went on paying the stipends of flamens, augurs, and vestals—personages usually of high rank. It appears that in fact the autocrat could not or dared not yet enforce his laws against the pagan worships. In the East in general, however, and even in Italy, wherever temples were unfrequented and ill defended they were liable to shameless plunder or destruction by Christians, who were safe from punishment.

On the other hand, Constantius multiplied the financial privileges of Christians, gave higher stipends to the clergy and doles of corn to the congregations, and maintained an enormous retinue of vicious Christian parasites, the whole process worsening the already desperate public burdens, and straining to the utmost a financial system already near the point of collapse. As head of the Church, he presided at Councils; and as a semi-Arian he encouraged Arianism and persecuted Athanasianism, the orthodox not daring openly to gainsay him. As little did either party

condemn him when he brutally murdered the young Gallus, the Christian brother of Julian, leaving only the latter alive of all Constantine's house. To the bishops assembled in council he announced that his will was as good as a canon; and he forbade them to condemn opinions which he held. One bishop he caused to be tortured; others to be banished; one he put to death; and he would doubtless have slain Athanasius had he not been so well concealed by the monks of Egypt. Under his pressure the council of Rimini declared for Arianism; and for himself he framed the new title "His Eternity," calling himself the lord of the universe. Only the favor of the empress, and the emperor's own fears, saved Julian from his brother's fate, as his death seems to have been planned. The Church was worthy of its head. "At each episcopal election or expulsion," says an orthodox writer, "the most exalted sees of Christendom —Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch—furnished scenes that would have disgraced a revolution." Julian has told how whole troops of those who were called heretics were massacred, notably at Cyzicus and at Samosata; while in Paphlagonia, Bithynia, Galatia, and many other provinces, towns and villages were utterly destroyed. In one massacre at Constantinople, the second in connection with the forcible re-instalment of the semi-Arian bishop Macedonius (342), there perished more than three thousand people—considerably more than had suffered death in the whole ten years of the last pagan persecution. The orthodox populace, divided in furious factions, fighting like savages in their very churches, were as brutal as their masters; and no priesthood was ever more powerless for good than the Christian clergy in face

of these horrors. Gregory of Nazianzun, whose own ferocities of utterance illustrate the character of the period, declared truly that he had never seen a synod do aught but worsen a quarrel. Such was Christianity under the first Christian-bred emperor. And if Tiridates of Armenia (conv. 302) be taken as the first Christian king, the beginnings of State Christianity are not greatly improved, since there the new faith was spread by fire and sword, and the old persecuted unremittingly for a hundred years, during which time raged many wars of religion between Armenia and Persia. The new faith had "come not to bring peace."

§ 4. *Reaction under Julian.*

By common consent, the episode of the short pagan "revival" under Julian is the most interesting chapter in the later history of the Roman Empire proper. The one emperor after Marcus Aurelius who attracts us as a human being and as a mind, he set himself a task which, whether he failed or succeeded, must lift his name high in the annals of a decadent civilisation: his failure, in fact, makes him the most living figure in the long line of autocrats from Constantine to Charlemagne. It is by such contrast, indeed, that he becomes eminent. Measured by the standards of progressive civilisations, against the great minds of the pre-imperial world and the best statesmen of later realms, he is neither a great ruler nor a great intelligence. To look for a ruling mind of the highest order in that environment of decay would be to miss the first and last lesson of the history of the empire. Supposing a really great faculty to be born in such a

society, it could not conceivably grow to efficiency: the intellectual and the emotional atmosphere forbade. Before there can be all-round minds there must be all-round men; and the empire had made an end of the species. Intellectual originality had long disappeared from a world in which the topmost distinction stood for mere brute force, cultured men grovelling before it like scourged animals. The brooding intensity of Lucretius and the large sanity of Cæsar were become as impossible to men of the Roman name as the life of the forum of Coriolanus' day, or the Greek literature of the age of Aristophanes. The process of putting a yoke on the world had duly ended in a world of yoke-bearers, whose best leaders could but harness them. Julian, a wistful child, saved from the massacre of his house, and growing up in a library whose lore there was no man competent to comment for him, became finally a believer in every religion save the one which sought to exterminate the rest. Steeped in theosophies, he was capable of exulting in the disappearance of the Epicureans, the sanest because the least credulous of the philosophic sects. Yet the lore he loved, such as it was, had sufficed to make him or keep him a model of temperance and self-control; chaste and abstemious while master of the world; just and magnanimous under provocations which, if he would, he could have met by wholesale slaughter; caring above all for the inner life while wielding capably the whole armed power of the State. If we talk of moral success, it must still be said that Christianity never gave any section of the Roman Empire a ruler worthy to stand by Marcus and Julian; and that on all the thrones of the world to-day there is no man who can be compared with them in moral

nobility. If, again, we keep our eyes on the age of Constantine, we cannot but be struck by the fact that Constantius "the pale," the father of Constantine, a monotheist but not a Christian, and Julian, who turned away from Christianity to polytheism, are by far the best men in the series of rulers of that house. Christianity attracted the worse men, Constantine and his sons, and repelled or failed to satisfy the better; and the younger Constantius, who was bred and remained a Christian, is the worst of all. The finer character-values are all associated with paganism: on the Christian side there is a signal defect of good men.

Julian's short life was crowded no less with experience than with study. Educated as a Christian, he learned, while his life lay at the mercy of Constantius, to keep his own counsel as to the creed of which he had seen such bloody fruits. It seems to have been before the murder of his brother (354) that he was secretly converted to paganism, during his studies at Pergamos. When he was appointed Cæsar (355) it was under strict tutelage; and during his five years of able generalship as Cæsar in Gaul and Germany, even after the legions had proclaimed him Augustus (360), he concealed his creed. It was only when marching against Constantius that he avowed it, and offered sacrifices to the ancient Gods; but when the death of the terror-stricken emperor left him in sole power (361) he at once proceeded zealously to reinstate the old rites. Himself an ardent idealist and practical ascetic, he yearned to make paganism a ministry of purity and charity, which should copy from the Christians their primary Judaic practice of feeding the poor, and set its face against popular ribaldry as steadfastly as they once had done, but with a Stoic

temperance rather than a gloomy fanaticism. To this end he built and endowed new temples, re-endowed the priesthoods where they had been robbed, and forced the return or repair of such of their lands, buildings, and possessions as had been stolen or confiscated; at the same time taking back the privileges and endowments accorded to the Christians. For all this, and no less for his antipathy to the vulgar side of paganism, he was scurrilously and insolently lampooned, notably by the pagan and Christian mobs of Antioch; but he attempted no vengeance, though he was sensitive enough to reply by satire. The intensely malignant attacks on his memory by churchmen leave it clear that he never descended to persecution, unless we so describe his action in excluding Christians from teaching in the schools of rhetoric, for which he had at least the pretext that they constantly aspersed the pagan literature there studied, and ought in consistency to have left it alone. Some of them indeed had earnestly desired the total suppression of those very schools. What most exasperated his Christian assailants, it is clear, was his sardonic attitude to Christian quarrels. Instead of persecuting, he protected the factions from each other, restored exiled heretics, and invited rival dogmatists to dispute in his presence, where their animosities served to humiliate their creed to his heart's content. It was the sting of such a memory that drove Gregory of Nazianzun, bitterly conscious of Christian hates, to such a passion of hate against Julian, whose body he would fain have seen cast into the common sewer.

It has been questioned whether the eagerness of Julian's desire to discredit Christism would not have made him a persecutor had he lived longer; and such

a development is indeed conceivable. His zeal was such that with all the load of empire and generalship on his shoulders he found time in his short reign to write a long treatise against the Christian books and creed, of which his full knowledge and excellent memory made him a formidable critic; and his tone towards Athanasius seems to have grown more and more bitter. It is hard for the master of thirty legions to tolerate opposition and to remain righteous. On the other hand, Julian gave proofs not only of an abnormal self-restraint, but of an exceptional judgment in things purely political; and the very fact that his young enthusiasm had led him astray, making him hope for a vital restoration of paganism out of hand, would probably with such a mind have counted for caution after the lesson had been learned. Falling in battle with the Persians (363) after only twenty months of full power, he had no time to readjust himself to the forces of things as experience disclosed them to him: he had time only to feel disappointment. Had he lived to form his own judgment instead of merely assimilating the ideas of his Neo-Platonic teachers he would be in a fair way to frame a better philosophy of life than either the polytheistic or the Christian. Such a philosophy had been left by Epictetus, to name no other; and Julian's passion for rites and sacrifices was really a falling below pagan wisdom and ethics current in his time, as his facile belief in myths was a falling below the pagan rationalism set forth a little later by Macrobius, and not unknown in Julian's day. No less unworthy of the best pagan thought was his affectation of cynic uncleanliness—an inverted foppery likely to have passed with youth. A few years must have taught him that men were not to be regenerated

by pagan creeds any more than by Christian; and to his laws for the reform of administration he might have added some for the reform of culture. Dying in his prime, he has formed a text for much Christian rhetoric to the effect that he had dreamed a vain dream. Insofar, however, as that rhetoric assumes the indestructibility of the Christian Church at the hands of pagan emperors, it is no sounder than the most sanguine hopes of Julian.

To say that Julian had hopelessly miscalculated the possibilities of paganism is to misconceive the whole sociological case if it be implied that Christianity survived in virtue of its dogma or doctrine, and that it was on the side of dogma or morality that paganism failed. As a regenerating force Christianity was as impotent as any pagan creed: it was indeed much less efficacious than one pagan philosophy had been, and had visibly set up in the State new ferocities of civil strife. Under the two Antonines, Stoic principles had governed the empire so well, relatively to the possibilities of the system, that many modern historians have been fain to reckon theirs the high-water mark of all European administration. No such level was ever reached in the Christian empire, from Constantine onwards. Julian himself schemed more solid reforms of administration in his one year of rule than any of his Christian successors ever accomplished, with the exceptions of Marcian and Anastasius; and could he have foreseen how the empire was to go in Christian hands he would certainly have had no reason to alter his course. To take the mere actual continuance of Christianity as a proof of its containing more truth or virtue than the whole of Paganism is to confuse biological survival with moral

merit. "The survival of the fittest," a principle which holds good of every aspect of Nature, is not a formula of moral discrimination, but a simple summary of evolution. The camel which survives in a waterless desert is not thereby proved a nobler animal than the horse or elephant which perishes there. Christianity, as we have seen, while utterly failing among the Jews, where it had birth, had subsisted from the first in the pagan world (1) through adopting the attractive features of Paganism, and (2) because of its politico-economical adaptations. Paganism—nominal paganism, that is—disappeared as an institution because such adaptations were not given to it.

Nor is it reasonable to say that Julian's undertaking was impossible. His plans were indeed those of an inexperienced enthusiast; but had he lived as long as Constantine, and learned by experience, he might have witnessed his substantial success; and a century of intelligently continuous policy to the same end might have expelled Christianity as completely from the Roman world as Buddhism was soon to be expelled from India. No one who has studied the latter phenomenon can use the language commonly held of the attempt of Julian. Buddhism, representing at least as high a moral impetus as that of Christism, had arisen and flourished greatly in direct opposition to Brahmanism; after centuries of success it is found assimilating all the popular superstitions on which Brahmanism lived, even as Christianity assimilated those of paganism; and it was either by assimilating elements of Buddhism on that plane or by such policy joined with coercive force that the Brahmans finally eliminated it from their sphere. Had a succession of Roman emperors set themselves

to create a priestly organisation of pagan cults, with as good an economic basis as that of Brahmanism, or as that of Judaism was even after the fall of the Temple, they could have created a force which might triumph over the new cult in its own sphere even as Brahmanism and Judaism did. And if at the same time they had left the Church severely alone, allowing its perpetual strifes to do their own work, it would inevitably have dissolved itself by sheer fission into a hundred mutually menacing factions, an easy foe for a coherent paganism. Mere spasmodic persecution had previously failed, for it is not random persecution that kills creeds, though a really relentless and enduring persecution can do much. In the period from 330 to 370, and again in the sixth century, the Persian kings did actually, by sheer bloodshed, so far crush orthodox Christianity in their kingdom (leaving only the Nestorians as anti-Byzantine heretics) that it ceased to have any importance there—a circumstance little noted by those who dwell on its "success" in Europe. And the same Sassanide dynasty, beginning in the middle of the third century, effected the systematic revival of the Mazdean religion, which before had seemed corrupted and discredited past remedy.

Had Julian lived to learn in Persia the methods so successfully used by Ardeshir, he might no less successfully have copied them. Only an idealist like Julian, of course, would have thought the effort on peaceful lines worth while. A much abler and better man than Jovian would reasonably decide in his place that the religion of Mithra, having come from the triumphant Persian enemy, could hardly continue to be that of the Roman army; and that the most politic course was to revert to the cult which Julian had

opposed, and whose champions saw in his death the hand of their God working for them. Nonetheless, the common verdict on Julian as the victim of a hopeless delusion is hardly better founded than the gross fable that on receiving his death-wound he cried, "Thou hast conquered, Galilean." The Christians, indeed, might well exult and fabulise over his death. It probably made all the difference between prosperity and collapse for their creed, already riven in irreconcilable factions, and capable of a general cohesion only through the coercive power of the State.

§ 5. *Re-establishment: Disestablishment of Paganism.*

It is significant that neither the weak Jovian, thrust on the throne by a cabal of Christian officers at the death of Julian, nor the forceful Valentinian who succeeded him, attempted to persecute paganism, though both were professed Christians. In the assertions of the ecclesiastical historians to the contrary, in the next century, the wish was father to the thought. Jovian's ignominious retreat from Persia was made after open pagan auguries; the nominally Christian senate of Constantinople sent him a deputation headed by the pagan Themistius, who exhorted him on high grounds of pagan ethics to practise an absolute toleration; and he did, save as regards the continued crusade against secret magical rites, though he re-established the Christians in many of their privileges. Of Valentinian it has been said that he of all the Christian emperors best understood and maintained freedom of worship; and beyond confiscating to the imperial domain the possessions formerly

taken from pagan temples and restored to them by Julian, he left them unmolested. Pagan priests of the higher grades he treated with greater fiscal favour than had been shown to them even by Julian, giving them immunities and honours which exasperated the Christians. It may have been the fact of his ruling the still strongly pagan West that made Valentinian thus propitiate the old priesthoods; but his brother Valens, who ruled the East, enforced the same tolerance, save insofar as he, an Arian, persecuted the Athanasians. His forcing of monks to re-enter the *curia*, that is, to resume the burdens of municipal taxation, may have been motived by dislike of them, but was a reasonable fiscal measure. The cruel persecution of diviners, carried on by both brothers, was the outcome of both fear and anger at the rapid spread of divination, to which was devoted at that period an extensive literature: the public or official Roman divination by augury was expressly permitted, as were the Eleusinian mysteries. All the while, Christians were little less given to divination than pagans.

Thus in the thirty years from the death of Constantine to the accession of Theodosius the Great, while the Church continued to grow in wealth, it can have made little progress politically, and it certainly made none morally. The law of Valentinian against the gain-seeking monks and priests of Rome is the testimony of a Christian emperor to the new demoralisation set up by his Church. Perhaps on pagan pressure, but apparently with emphasis, he forbade ecclesiastics to receive personal gifts or legacies from the women of property to whom they acted as spiritual advisers. Such a law was of course

evaded by such expedients as trusteeships: greed was not to be baulked by legal vetoes. The higher clergy showed the same instincts; and in the final struggle of Damasus and Ursinus to secure by physical force the episcopal chair of Rome (366), one hundred and thirty-seven dead bodies were counted in the basilica, Damasus having hired gladiators to carry his point. In the provinces, doubtless, the church was often better represented; and the new species of *chorepiscopi* or rural bishops must have included some estimable men; but at all the great Christian centres reigned violence, greed, and hate. In North Africa the feud between the Donatists and the rest of the Church had reached the form of a chronic civil war, in which Donatist peasant fanatics, called Circumcelliones, met the official persecution by guerilla warfare of the savagest sort. In the East, the furious strifes between Arians and Athanasians were sufficient to discredit the entire Church as a political factor; and the better pagans saw in it a much worse ethical failure than could be charged on their own philosophies. "Make me bishop of Rome," said the pagan prefect Praetextatus jestingly to Damasus, "and I will be a Christian." What rational element lay in Arianism was countervailed by the corruption set up by court favour; and orthodoxy found its account in popular ignorance. One of the last notably philosophic heretics was Photinus, bishop of Sirmium, who in 343 revived the doctrine of a "modal" Trinity. Anathematised and ostracised by Athanasians and Arians alike, he died in exile.

The accession (379) of Theodosius, made co-emperor by Gratian, son of Valentinian, on the fall of Valens,

marks the final establishment of Trinitarian Christianity, with the official suppression of Arianism and paganism. The young Gratian had been partly educated under Bishop Ambrose of Milan, one of the first notable types of masterful ecclesiastic; and under that influence he confiscated the lands of the pagan temples in the West, withdrew the privileges of the priests, and caused to be removed from the Senate at Rome the ancient and sacred statue of the Goddess Victory, formerly removed by Constantius and restored by Julian. Fiscal needs seem to have had much to do with the confiscations, for the economic life of the western empire was steadily sinking. The young emperor did not attempt to prohibit pagan worship or abolish the right of the temples to receive legacies; and though he is said to have refused the title of Pontifex Maximus it seems to have been officially given to him. His anti-pagan policy, however, seems to have counted for something in his unpopularity, which became so great that when Maximus revolted in Britain and invaded Gaul, Gratian was abandoned on all hands. Maximus too was a Christian—another proof that since Constantine many military men had come to think "the luck was changed"—and though he conciliated the pagans he did not re-endow their cults. It was under his auspices, too, that Priscillian, bishop of Avila, in Spain, who had adopted Gnostic views closely resembling those of the Manichæans, and had been banished under Gratian, was tried in Gaul for his heresy, put to the torture, and executed at Treves with several of his followers. A new step had thus been taken in the process of establishment, so that when Theodosius overthrew Maximus and left the empire of the west to the young Valentinian, the

cause of official paganism was much weakened. And when Valentinian in turn was deposed and slain by the pagan party, though Ambrose confessedly thought the Christian cause in the west was lost, Eugenius did not venture to restore to the priesthoods the possessions and revenues which had been turned to the support of the decaying State, menaced all along the north by a hungry barbarism that grew ever more conscious of its power, and of the impotence of the imperial colossus.

When Eugenius and his party in turn fell before Theodosius, the cause of State-paganism was visibly lost; and though Theodosius died in the following year (395) he left the old cults finally disestablished in Italy as well as in the East. In his reign of sixteen years in the East he had as far as possible suppressed Arianism, depriving the Arians of their churches; had caused or permitted many of the already disendowed pagan temples to be robbed and dismantled; and had prohibited all pagan worships, besides continuing the crusade against divination. Under the shelter of such persecuting edicts, monks and other enterprising Christians, calling themselves "reformers," were at liberty everywhere to plunder or destroy the shrines, and even to secure the lands of pagans on the pretence that they had defied the law and offered sacrifices. So gross became the demoralisation that Theodosius, more scrupulous than the clergy, at length passed a law to punish the Christian spoilers; but this could not save the pagans. Many of them, to save themselves, affected conversion, and went to Christian altars to do inward reverence to their old Gods. There can have been no worthy process of moral suasion under such circumstances.

Coercion, applauded by Augustine and personally practised by such Christian leaders as St. Martin of Tours, became the normal procedure; and naturally the constrained converts brought with them into the Church all the credences of their previous life. For the Church, such a triumph was glory enough, especially when there was added to it a law by which all Christian offenders, clerical or lay, were amenable to trial and punishable before ecclesiastical tribunals only.

It does not appear that the many cruel laws of Theodosius against heretics and pagans were carried out to the letter: it had sufficed for the overthrow of official paganism that it should be cut off from its financial basis; and the emperor not only tolerated but employed professed pagans, being even willing to grant to those of Rome concessions which Ambrose could not endure. On their part the pagans, though still very numerous, were non-resistant. Broadly speaking, they consisted of two sorts—the more or less philosophic few, who were for the most part monotheists, inclined to see in all Gods mere symbols of the central power of the universe; and the unphilosophic multitude, high and low, who believed by habit, and whose spiritual needs were on the ordinary Christian plane. The former sort were not likely to battle for the old machinery of sacrifice and invocation; and the latter, with none to lead them, were not hard to turn, when once new habits had time to grow. Whoever gave them a liturgy and rites and sacraments, with shrines and places of adoration, might count on satisfying their religious learnings; and this the Christian organisation was zealously bent on doing. Their festivals were preserved and adapted; their local "heroes" had become

Christian martyrs and patron saints; their mysteries were duplicated; their holy places were but new-named; their cruder ideals were embraced. In the way of ceremonial, as Mosheim avows, there was "little difference in those times between the public worship of the Christians and that of the Greeks and Romans." The *lituus* of the augur had become the crozier of the bishop; the mitres and tiaras of the heathen priests were duly transferred to the new hierarchy; and their processions were as nearly as possible copies of those of the great ceremonial cults of Egypt and the East. A sample of the process of adaptation lies in the ecclesiastical calendar, where in the month of October are (or were) commemorated on three successive days Saint Bacchus, Saint Demetrius, and Saints Dionysos, Rusticus, and Eleutherius, all described as martyrs. The five names are simply those of the God Dionysos, whose rustic festival was held at that season. In the same way, Osiris becomes St. Onuphrius, from his Coptic name, Onufri. It is probable, again, that from the year 376, when the shrine of Mithra at Rome was destroyed by Christian violence, the Roman Pope, who succeeded the high priest of Mithra at the Vatican mount, sat in the Mithraic sacred chair, as he does at this day. As representing Peter, he bore Mithra's special symbols. And where the higher paganism had come to repudiate the popular religion of trappings and ceremonial no less than that of sacrifice and that of mere self-mortification, established Christianity placed the essence of religion anew in external usages on the one hand and asceticism on the other; cherishing the while every "superstition" of the past, and beginning a species of image-worship that the past had hardly known. What was

overthrown was merely public or official worship: the religious essentials of paganism—to wit, polytheism; the belief in the intercession of subordinate spiritual powers; the principles of sacrifice and propitiation, penance and atonement; the special adoration of local shrines and images; the practice of ritual mysteries and imposing ceremonies; the public association of a worship with the fortunes of the State—all these were preserved in the Catholic Church, with only the names changed. There was no "destruction of paganism," there was merely transformation. And so immeasurably slow are the transformations of national habit that for many generations even the terminology and the specific usages of paganism survived in every aspect save that of open worship; so that Theodosius and his sons were fain to pass law after law penalising those who ventured to revert from Christianity to paganism. Such reversions were the measure of the moral as compared with the official success of Christianity.

The last act in the official crusade against paganism, open spoliation, had become possible at length through the sheer decadence of character in the empire. In the west, so-called Romans had lived on a tradition of ancient rule till they were become as masquerading apes in the light of the retrospect: all that was left of patrician semblance was a faculty for declamation, pedantry, and pomp. The repeated discussions over the removal of the statue of Victory were on the senatorial side a tissue of artificial rhetoric, on the Christian a mixture of frank bigotry and bad sophistry. Religious fanaticism, the last and lowest form of moral energy, abounded only with the mob; and the formless pagan crowd, never in touch with priests

or senators, and never conscious of a common centre, was useless for political purposes when at length the upper class had need of it; while the much smaller Christian mob, drilled and incited to a common fervour, was a force formidable even to the autocrat. Patricians whose line had for centuries cringed in all things political were not the men to lose their lives for a ceremonial; and those of them who as priests had been plundered by Gratian and Theodosius were on this side also devoid of organisation, and incapable of joint action. The rule of Valentinian had forced the Christian Church to remain in touch with its original and popular sources of revenue; whereas the pagan priesthoods, once deprived of stipends and domains, had nowhere to turn to, and may be said to have fallen without a blow, unless the deposition of Valentinian II. by Arbogastes, and the short usurpation of Eugenius, be regarded as their last official effort to survive. But the cause of empire in the west was no less moribund than that of the ancient Gods. Italy was reaching the last stage of economic and military depletion. The richest revenue-yielding provinces of the empire lay in Africa and the East; and when there came the fatal struggle with barbarism, the eastern and richer part of the empire, so long wont to act independently of the western, let that succumb. It was at least dramatically fit that the multiform and fortuitous contexture of Roman paganism, evolved like the empire itself by a long series of instinctive acts and adaptations, unruled by any higher wisdom, should yield up its official form and sustenance to feed the dying body politic, and should be expunged from the face of the State before that was overthrown. Augustine might

say what he would to the reproachful pagans, but the last humiliation came under Christian auspices; and the fanatical Jerome, type of the transformation of Roman energy from action to private pietism, had to weep in his old age that his cult could not save the immemorial city whose very name had so long ruled the world, and was almost the last semblance of a great thing left in it.

It consisted with the universal intellectual decadence that neither the pagans nor the Christians realised the nature of either the religious or the political evolution, the former regarding the new faith as a blasphemy which had brought on the empire the ruinous wrath of the Gods; the latter calling the barbaric invasion a divine punishment both of pagan and Christian wickedness, and seeing in the decline of all pagan worship the defeat of a false faith by a true. Neither had the slightest perception of the real and human causation; the degradation of the peoples by the yoke of Rome; the economic ruin and moral paralysis of Rome by sheer empire: and as little could they realise that the fortunes of the creeds were natural socio-political sequences. What had socially happened was essentially an economic process, howbeit one set up by a religious credence. Paganism as a public system disappeared because it was deprived of all its revenues; Christianity as a system finally flourished because the church was legally empowered to receive donations and legacies without limit, and debarred from parting with any of its property. Any corporation whatever, any creed whatever, would have flourished on such a basis; while only a priesthood capable of building up a voluntary revenue as the Christian church had originally done could survive

on pagan lines after the Christian creed had been established. The pagan priesthoods, originally generated on a totally different footing, could not learn the economic lesson, could not readjust themselves to a process which, as we have seen, originated in conditions of fanatical nonconformity, which latter-day paganism could not reproduce. But so far were the mental habitudes and the specific beliefs of paganism from disappearing that Christian historians in our own day bitterly denounce it for "infecting" their "revealed" creed. What had really died out on the "spiritual" side was the primitive ideal of the Christian Church. What survived as Christianity was really an idolatrous polytheism.

CHAPTER III.

FAILURE WITH SURVIVAL.

§ 1. *The Overthrow of Arianism.*

Theodosius was the last ruler of the empire proper who was capable of leading his army; and from his death onwards the fall of the western section proceeded at headlong rate. His sons, Honorius and Arcadius, were worse weaklings than even the sons of Valentinian: to fit for the throne a child born in the purple, always a hard task, seemed impossible under Christianity. At the end of the fourth century begins the series of convulsions which mark the end of the Roman empire properly so-called. In the year after Theodosius' death, Alaric invaded and ravaged Greece; and, manœuvred thence by Stilicho, proceeded to invade Italy. The tentative character of these unsuccessful first attempts, and of that of Rhadagast, only made more sure the triumph of the later; and invasion followed on invasion, till by the middle of the fifth century the West had lost Gaul, Spain, and Africa; and in the year 476 Rome, thrice sacked, received at last a barbarian king.

Through all these storms Christianity more than held its ground. The invaders were Christians, like the invaded, albeit heretics; the first conversion of Goths by the Arian Ulphilas in the previous century having been widely extended. The form of the

dogma mattered nothing to the political function of the church, which was, among the barbarians as in the empire, to promote centralisation up to the point at which schism became ungovernable. The Teutonic chieftains, it is clear, saw in the Christian church a means of partially welding their peoples somewhat as Rome had been welded; and while Arianism held the ground among them, it furthered the unity that in the Eastern empire was now being lost. And inasmuch as normal community of creed made possible an assimilation between the invaders and the conquered, Christianity positively facilitated the fall of the Western empire. In Africa, again, where the Donatists, with their four hundred bishops, had been freshly persecuted under Honorius, the schism helped the invading Vandals, who paid for the Donatists' help by giving them freedom of worship. It is probable that the Manichæans, who were numerous in the same province, and who were also much persecuted, at first welcomed the invaders. So obvious was the risk of such alienations of heretics that Honorius, listening for a moment to the advice of tolerant pagans, went so far as to issue a law of general toleration. This, however, the orthodox clergy forced him to repeal, and the persecution of Donatists went from bad to worse. All the while the old paganism was still so common in the West that Honorius, who on the advice of his pious minister Olympius, after the fall of Stilicho, had sought to expel by edict all pagans and Arians from the service of the State, was fain later to entreat leading pagans to return. But the Arian Goths in turn showed the pagans no favour; in Greece, Alaric even broke up the Eleusinian mysteries; and the Vandals in Africa

soon persecuted the Manichæans even more bloodily than they did the Athanasians, whom they went far to drive out of the province. In this way they in turn weakened their State, besides otherwise undergoing the social diseases of empire, so that in the sixth century Belisarius was able to reconquer it for Justinian, the emperor of the East. In Spain, conquered by the Arian Visigoths, there was relative toleration. The Arian clergy, however, being mostly unlettered Teutons, were less useful instruments to the ruler than Catholics could be; and late in the sixth century a new king at his accession there adopted Trinitarianism.

The further the orthodox faith went, the more dangerous, it was clear, was the position of the remaining Arian kingdoms, since their heresy was always a pretext for a union of the others to crush them. A barbarian king, told by his clergy that he did God service in destroying heretics, needed little further encouragement to war; and such counsel the orthodox Church was always ready to give. Already at the end of the fifth century the immigrant Franks established in Gaul under Clovis were "converted" in mass, by the mere fiat of their king, to orthodox Christianity; and the reconquest of Italy by Belisarius and Narses further strengthened the Catholic cause. It was thus good policy for the Lombards, who in their turn conquered the north and south but never the centre of Italy, to begin to give up their Arianism at the end of the century. It is probable, however, that in any case Arianism would in course of time have fallen in the new barbaric States as it did in the eastern empire. The toleration given by Theodoric in Italy, and by the earlier Arian Goths in Spain and

Gaul, to the Catholic creed, could avail nothing to stay the orthodox purpose of destroying heresy; and the element of rationalism on the Arian side was precisely what could least prosper in an era of ignorance. Thus the Catholic creed had time and credulity on its side; and, Christianity at that stage being above all things politically useful as an aid to arbitrary government, the most pronounced and sacerdotal and superstitious form of Christianity must be the most useful from a calculating monarch's point of view.

Such, broadly, was the development in the East, where the virtual suppression or expulsion of Arianism by Theodosius and his successors showed what persistent persecution could do when carried on by both penal and economic means, through a hierarchy who knew how and where to strike, and had their hearts in the work. Arianism was not destroyed; indeed all of the great heresies of the first five centuries—Marcionism, Montanism, Arianism, Manichæism, Monophysitism, to say nothing of the Nestorian Church in Asia—are found subsisting in the eastern empire in the seventh century, despite both disendowment and cruel persecution, thus in effect proving that had Christianity been simply left alone, neither helped nor attacked by the State, it would have been dissolved in a score of warring sects by the fifth century. The Manichæans were as inflexible as ever were any of the Christists; and as against the convictions of the heretics in general the moral failure of the orthodox Church was absolute. By executing Priscillian in the fourth century it simply inflamed his following, which was strong in Spain two hundred years later. But though the endowed clergy could not convert or

exterminate the others, they could keep them poor and ostracised, and wield against them the subsidised mob as well as the whole machinery of the State. Against such oppression the heretics could not compete as the early Jesuists had done against the careless course of paganism, with its isolated priests, so much more often indifferent than fanatical.

Where early Christism had met the cravings alike of ascetics, of mystics, of simple emotionalists, and of poor seekers after a concrete God not hedged around with altars and priests, thus appealing both to heretic Jews and to heretic Gentiles, the later heresies ostensibly appealed as a rule either to ascetics or to dogmatists, and offered nothing to the multitude that it could not find within the Church, shades of dogma apart. Manichæism indeed remained to prove that what was virtually a new religion could rise and persist for centuries in the teeth of Christianity, by methods and appeals very like those of Christism; but it also served to prove that organised and endowed Christianity, inspired by an enduring hate, could check and overshadow the rival religion where unorganised paganism, for lack of general animus and systematic official zeal, had failed to subdue Christianity. And the political elimination of nominal Arianism in the West served to prove afresh that orthodoxy finally triumphed in that regard by enlisting on its side not only the instincts of polytheism but the interests of monarchy. It is significant that, driven from the empire, Arianism flourished best in the barbarian world, where for a time some mental freedom might be supposed to subsist. If any rational motive is to be assigned for the zealous adoption of the Athanasian creed by such rulers as Theodosius, it is presumably

their perception that the most irrational dogma went best with discipline: that the spirit which presumed to rationalise religion was the less ready for political obedience. In any case, the triumph of orthodoxy went step for step not only with intellectual dissolution and moral paralysis, but with the disruption of the empire.

§ 2. *The Cost of Orthodoxy.*

The constant law of theological development was that all stirrings of reason were anathematised as heresy, and that dogmas became orthodox in the ratio of their extravagance. Paganising and polytheistic heresy such as that of the Collyridians of Arabia (4th c.), who worshipped Mary as a Goddess and offered her cakes (*collyridæ*) as their mothers had done to Ashtaroth, ran little risk: their heresy in fact was on the way to be orthodoxy. Saner heresies fared differently. Late in the fourth century we find the Italian monk Jovinian opposing asceticism, urging a rational morality, and explaining that Mary ceased to be a virgin on bringing forth Jesus; for which offences he was condemned in Church Councils, flogged, and banished to a desolate island. A little later, Vigilantius, a presbyter from Gaul, ventured to oppose the growing worship of relics, prayers to saints, the use of sacred tapers, vigils, and pilgrimages, as well as to decry many current miracles. So furious was the outcry of Jerome in his case that he had to hold his peace if he would save his life. No leading churchman said a word for either reformer: Ambrose and Jerome both condemned Jovinian; and the language of Jerome against Vigilantius is a revelation

of the new possibilities of intellectual malice created by creed. On this side, human nature had reverted several degrees to Hebraism. Later still, the heresy of Pelagius, also a western, aroused a bitter orthodox opposition, led by Augustine. Pelagius (a name probably the Grecised form of the British name Morgan) and Cœlestius, an Irishman, both monks in Rome about the years 400–410, drew up a systematic argument against the doctrines of human depravity, predestination, and salvation by grace, denied the damnation of unbaptised infants and virtuous unbaptised adults, rejected the Biblical teaching that Adam died in consequence of his sin or entailed sin on posterity, and taught a relatively rational ethic. Flying from Rome on Alaric's invasion, they went, Cœlestius to Carthage and Pelagius to the East; the former to be condemned by a council at Carthage (412), the latter to be for a time supported against attacks, but later to be condemned likewise. Henceforth the half-suppressed vestiges of Pelagianism (chiefly in the hesitating form of semi-Pelagianism, according to which God foreordained good but merely foreknew evil) were the only signs left in the West, apart from Arianism, of the spirit of critical reason, till the first stirrings of the renascence.

In the West, it will be observed, spontaneous heresy had run to questions of action and ethics, partly following a Roman tradition of concern for conduct, partly expressing barbarian common-sense. To such thought, Christianity was alien, and it was cried down by voluble theologians like Augustine, backed, doubtless, not only by the average obedient priest, but by some who saw that the principles of Pelagius, logically carried out, made an end on the one hand of

the whole Christian scheme, and on the other of the conception of an omnipotent God. Such reasoners must equally have seen that the Augustinian dogmas of predestination and grace made an end of human responsibility; and this was urged by some Pelagians, but with no effect. The irrational dogma best consisted with the functions and finance of the church, and it was ecclesiastically established accordingly.

In the East, though there also Pelagius found followers, spontaneous heresy, as we have seen, was usually a matter of abstract dogma, as in the schisms of Praxeas, Sabellius, Paul of Samosata, Arius, and the Gnostics; thought there continuing to follow the lead given to it by the older Greek dialectics. Aërius, who raised in Asia Minor in the fourth century an agitation against episcopacy, fasts, prayers for the dead, and the ceremony of slaying a lamb at Easter, is an exception among eastern heretics; and the dogmatic-dialectic tendency persisted. In the fifth century, Theodorus of Mopsuestia, a voluminous writer, taught rationally that most of the Old Testament prophecies applied by orthodoxy to Jesus had reference to events in pre-Christian history. Needless to say, this was heresy. But the chief new schisms of the period were those of Nestorius and the Monophysites. Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople, a pupil of Theodorus, but a zealous persecutor of heresy, became embroiled in the second stage of the endless wrangle as to the nature of Christ. In the latter half of the fourth century, Apollinaris, Bishop of Laodicea, a strong anti-Arian, holding that the dogma of a God-man was monstrous, had taught that Jesus was without a human soul (or mind, as distinguished from mere animal life), having only a divine one.

This was to "confound the two natures"; Apollinaris was condemned; and the Syrian orthodox rectified matters by insisting that there *were* two, while the Egyptians, recoiling from the risk of a theory of two Christs, insisted that the two were nevertheless one. Nestorius stood with his fellow-Syrians, and sought to crush the Apollinarians as he had helped to hound down Arians, Novatians, and other misbelievers. The Apollinarians, however, had a stronghold in their deification of Mary, whom they called *Theotokos* or *Deipara*, "the mother (bearer) of God"; and when the Nestorians denounced the common use of this term they incurred the wrath of the multitude, who, wont in the past to worship Goddess-mothers with a special devotion, and wroth at the attempt to put Mary lower than Isis and Cybelê, naturally sought to exalt Mary as they had exalted Jesus. A general Council (431) was called at Ephesus to denounce Nestorius; and he, the heresy-hunter, was convicted of blasphemy, classed with Judas, and banished for life. Thenceforth, orthodox Christianity was for all practical purposes a worship of a Goddess and two supreme Gods; and Nestorian Christianity, flourishing in Asia, became a hostile religion. Thus in the East as in the West the State was riven in new religious factions at the very hour when it needed above all things unity. Persia was at that very time beginning the acquisition of half of Armenia, as the Vandals were beginning the conquest of North Africa. To Persia the Nestorians were driven; and there, declaring themselves the friends of the enemies of the Byzantine empire, they were fostered, while the orthodox Christians were persecuted, massacred, and expelled.

To a thoughtful pagan, viewing the course of things,

it must have seemed as if the Gods had given over the Christians to madness. Among the chief enemies of Nestorius was Eutyches, an abbot of a Constantinople monastery. In the year 448, by way of making an end of Nestorianism, he explicitly taught that Christ had only one nature, the divine. Instantly this was in turn denounced as a return to the Apollinarian heresy, and Eutyches was cast out of the church by a hostile council. Another council, skilfully packed, acquitted him, and caused his accuser to be flogged and banished; but a third, that of Chalcedon (451), again condemned him. Thus was the Christian dogma fixed in the form of maximum arbitrariness and unintelligibility. The council of Nicæa (321) had determined against Arius that Christ was truly God, coequal and coeternal with his Father, separate and yet one; the Council of Constantinople (381) had determined against Apollinaris that he was also truly man; that of Ephesus (431) had established that the two natures were indivisibly one; and that of Chalcedon (451) that they were nevertheless perfectly distinct. All four dogmas became fixed constituents of the Christian creed. To this length had men evolved a myth. And there were still developments to come.

The condemned Eutycheans, modifying their position, but still calling themselves Monophysites, became in turn a force of fatal cleavage. The emperor Zeno, in the year 482, conciliated them by an edict called his Henoticon ("unifying"); but the orthodox only opposed them the more; though all the while the Monophysites professed to regard the "one nature" as a union of two, "yet without any conversion, confusion, or commixture." On this absolutely unintelligible difference the sects finally sundered their very

nationality. Late in the sixth century, under a new leader, Jacobus Baradæus, they became known as Jacobites; and when in the next century the rising movement of the Mohammedan Arabs broke upon Egypt, where they abounded, the hatred of Jacobites for Catholics was such as to make them welcome the anti-christian enemy, as they and others had previously welcomed the Persians in Syria. It is not to be supposed, indeed, that Christianity was the efficient cause of such a miserable evolution. The very insanity of the strifes of Christians over meaningless dogmas is primarily to be traced to the fatal constriction of life and energy represented by the imperial system. It was because men had no rational interests to strive over if they would, that they strove insanely over abracadabras of creed, and made war flags of the two colours of the charioteers of the circus; even as in Egypt the abject populations of the old cities, down to the time of Julian, fought to the death for their respective animal-Gods. But it is essential to note the absolute failure of Christianity to give to the decaying civilisation any light for its path. It flourished by reason of decadence, and it could not arrest it. What ultimately preserved any section of the Christian empire was the pagan heritage of law and system, applied to a State shorn of all its outlying and alien provinces, and reduced to the homogeneity and the status of a kingdom proper with a commercial and industrial life. Justinian was fain to set a non-Christian lawyer—pagan or atheist—to frame the code of laws by which Byzantium went on living; himself we find fulminating against revived heresies, anathematising the long-dead Origen, and latterly enouncing heresies of his own which, had he

lived longer, would have wrought fresh convulsions in the State.

Such is the note of Greek-Christian life down to the very hour of the supreme catastrophe which tore from the warlike Heraclius himself the provinces of Syria and Egypt (632–639), and, engulfing next North Africa, overthrew Christianity forever in the lands in which it had been built up. Heraclius, struggling to save a shaken empire, had early realised, as did Maurice before him, the madness of driving myriads of Nestorians into the arms of Persia; and after his triumph over Chosroes he sought to conciliate both Nestorians and Monophysites by a decree (630) to the effect that, while there were in Christ two natures, there was only one will, as was admitted by the Nestorians. For a time all seemed well, and many Monophysites in the outlying provinces returned to the Church. But in a few years an orthodox zealot, Sophronius, patriarch of Jerusalem, reopened the eternal debate, and declared that the new formula was a revival of the Eutychean heresy. In vain Heraclius, striving to save the remnants of the empire, sought to enforce his solution (639) by an *ecthesis*, or formula, which forbade further debate on the subject. The Catholics decided that there were two wills, though they always coincided; and the doctrine of one will—the "Monothelite" heresy—at length became a ground for the repudiation of the rule of Constans II. over Italy, a hundred bishops anathematising the *typus* or formula in which he endorsed the *ecthesis* of his grandfather. Finally, Constantine II. (681) accepted the doctrine that in Christ two wills were harmonised, and one more orthodox countersense was added to the definition of the God-Man who never was. The

so-called Athanasian creed—really a product of the Latin Church some centuries later than Athanasius—is a parade of the whole series. To this much had Christianity attained after four hundred years of indescribable strife. The one clue through the chaos is the perception that in every stage the dispute logically went back to the original issue of monotheism and polytheism. The church, holding by the Hebrew sacred books, was committed doctrinally to the former, but practically to the latter. Every affirmation of "one" tended to imperil the separate divinity of the sacrificed Jesus; and every affirmation of duality gave an opening to the polytheists. The one durable solution was, at each crisis, to make both affirmations, and so baffle at once reason and schismatic fanaticism.

In effect, Christianity had become polytheistic; and were it not that the personalities of Father Mother and Son satisfied the average religious need, as it had so long done in pre-Christian Egypt, the dispute actually begun by Bishop Macedonius of Constantinople in the fourth century over the modality of the Holy Ghost would have gone as far as those over the Son and "the Mother of God." In its first stage, the conception of the Holy Spirit, so vague and purposeless in the orthodox doctrine, would seem to have been distinctly that of a feminine Deity. We know from Origen that in the lost gospel of the Hebrews Jesus was made to speak of "My Mother the Holy Spirit." This was a heretical reversion, on Judæo-Gnostic lines, to the original Semitic theosophy, according to which every God had his female counterpart; but ordinary Jewish monotheism, which had put aside the female Spirit (*Ruach*) of its older lore,

was sufficiently strong to prevent the acceptance of such a heresy in the gospel-making period; and the accepted gospel birth-myth was better adapted to the general purposes of the cult. For the paganised Church, finally, the divinisation of Mary was a simple matter, as we have seen; and the Holy Spirit, which had obscurely entered the orthodox myth in a form really Samaritan, but permitted by Judaic doctrine, thenceforth remained a gratuitous enigma, capping the mystery of the co-eternal Father and Begotten Son. The Eastern Church, recoiling from a reiteration of the latter countersense, decided (381) that the Spirit "proceeded from" the Father, but not from the Son, thus virtually depriving the Son, after all, of his so-often affirmed equality. The root of the difficulty, as of the Trinitarian dogma in general, is to be seen in the old Egyptian pantheism, according to which the all-comprehending Amun "is at once the Father, the Mother, and the Son of God"; but even as the Amunite priests made play with the Son-God Khonsu after affirming the oneness of Amun, so the Christian priesthood was forced at every step to distinguish the Son while affirming the oneness of the Trinity; and each new dogma was a fresh ground for the old quarrel. In the end the Western Church rejected this Eastern heresy as it did the Monothelite, and the Council of Toledo (589) added to the creed the *Filioque* clause, thus stating that the Spirit proceeded from the Father "and from the Son." But at this point the Eastern Church remained obstinate; it admitted that the Spirit came through the Son, but would not say it "proceeded from" the Son; and the *Filioque* clause remained a standing ground of feud between East and West, as well as a

standing instance of the irrationality of the orthodox system. It is no wonder that in the seventh century eastern churchmen were still writing treatises against paganism, which, despite all the penal laws, persisted in virtue of its incoherent simplicity as against the coherent unintelligibility of the Christian creed.

A politic Christian, indeed, might point to the mere history of heresy as showing the need for a dogma which should give no foothold to reason. Like the Arians, the Monophysites had divided into warring sects, their crux being that of the corruptibility or incorruptibility of the body of Christ; and the two parties thus formed split in turn into five. The total schism was in the main racial, Egyptian opposing Greek; and the carnal jealousies of the patriarchs and bishops seem to have played a great part in creating it; but nothing could arrest the process of sub-division and strife. In one furious feud over the election of a bishop of the Monophysite church of Alexandria, a hundred and seventy years after the first Eutychean schism, the fighting reached the lowest stage of savagery; and Justinian's general Narses, who supported the "incorruptible" candidate at the behest of the empress Theodora, had to burn a large part of the city before he could carry his point. Soon afterwards, another imperial nominee, who entered the city in battle array, had to fight for his place; and the carnage was enormous. In every doctrinal strife in turn, the parties proceeded to bloodshed with a speed and zest which turned to derision the moral formulas of their creed. Such social delirium was chronic in Christendom from the age of Constantine to the triumph of the Saracens; and, needless to say, under such conditions there was no progress in civilization.

§ 3. *Moral and Intellectual Stagnation.*

On the intellectual side, ancient Christianity is on the whole at its strongest in the west, just before the fall of the western empire, as if the last mental energies of the Roman world had there found a channel. Augustine passed on to the middle ages a body of polemic theology sufficiently vivacious to constitute a Christian classic; and in him at last the Latin church had produced a personality comparable to Origen. Jerome, on the other hand, could compare with Origen as a scholar, and like him he laid bases for the scholarship of a later and reviving age. But the total achievement of Christianity on behalf of ancient civilisation had amounted to nothing. By spreading the dogma that error of belief, whether as paganism or as heresy, doomed men to eternal torment, it negated the very basis of human brotherhood, and gave a new dominion to hate, individual and corporate. It made neither good rulers nor a sound society. Valentinian must have been made tolerant in state affairs by the spirit of pagan policy: as a man he was so abnormally cruel that had he been a pagan the historians would have compared him to Nero. That a year after Julian's death there should be on the throne a Christian emperor who caused offenders to be thrown to wild bears in his own presence, is a memorable item in Christian history. Of his Arian brother Valens it is told that he caused to be burned at sea a shipload of eighty ecclesiastics who had come to him as a deputation. This may be an orthodox fiction; but such fictions are themselves signal proofs of demoralising

malignity; as is the orthodox suppression of the story of how the Arian bishop Deogratius at Carthage succoured the captives brought by the Vandals from the sack of Rome—one of the rare records of magnanimous humanity in the history of the age. From the orthodox themselves we know how Pope Leo had banished and imprisoned the Manichæans and Pelagians who sought refuge at Rome when the Vandals attacked Carthage. The emperors exhibit the process of decivilisation. Valentinian died of rage: his pious sons were weaklings; and Theodosius, when the rabble of Thessalonica braved him by murdering his governor for enforcing the law against a popular charioteer, treacherously planned a systematic and indiscriminate massacre by which there perished from seven to fifteen thousand men, women, and children. No pagan emperor had ever done the like; and no such number of Christians can have been put to death by Nero. Heraclius, after beheading Phocas, sent his head and limbs to be dragged through the streets of Constantinople—a reversion to barbarism. Two centuries earlier (415) a rabble of Alexandrian monks, acting in the interest of Cyril the Patriarch, seized the pagan teacher Hypatia, stripped her, tore her flesh from her bones with shells, and burned the remains. It is one of the anomalies of historiography that a moral rebirth of the world should have been held to begin in an age in which such things could be. Rather the Mediterranean world had grown more neurotically evil than ever before. The facts that Bishop Ambrose of Milan denounced the emperor's act, forcing him to do penance for seven months before readmitting him to worship, and that Theodosius

in his remorse submitted to the sentence and was afterwards less vindictive, are the best that can be recorded *per contra*. Ambrose himself warmly justified the burning of Jewish synagogues; and while he, with all his ecclesiastical frauds, showed a public spirit, it is a commonplace of Christian history that from the third century onwards bishops in general were self-seekers, who battled furiously over questions of diocesan boundaries, and were the ideal contrast to the legendary apostles. Among the Christianised barbarians who in their turn overran the empire, the moral phenomena become even worse, their religion seeming only to make them more savage and vicious.

All that Christianity had yielded under the form of moral betterment was an increasing glorification of chastity and celibacy, with some restraint on infanticide. When the western empire is on the verge of destruction, Rome being already sacked, we find Jerome expanding in an insane exultation over the news that a young Roman lady had taken the vow of virginity, an event to which he ascribes cosmic importance. The mother of such a virgin, he declares, becomes *ipso facto* "the mother-in-law of God." As always happens where sexual virtue is identified with abstinence, vice was excessive. Chrysostom in the East, and Salvian in Gaul, testify that alike in licence and in cruelty the Christianised State at the beginning of the fifth century was the worsened copy of the pagan world of four centuries before. The Greek Basil and the Italian Ambrose alike bear witness to the survival in the Christian church of all the excesses of the old Bacchanalia. Even the tradition that in the reign of Honorius (404) the horrible gladiatorial games were

abolished, is admitted by Christian scholarship to be false. It may be that a humane monk did lose his life in trying to stop them; but there is clear proof that the games subsisted in Christian Gaul at a later date, though even humane pagans had called for their abolition, and their cost was a heavy burden on the falling revenue. Centuries before the time of Honorius, Apollonius of Tyana was credited with causing them to be abolished at Athens. Not till the Gothic conquest did they cease in the west; nor did the piety of Honorius and his advisers withhold them from treacherous massacres, and from enacting the punishment of burning alive for frauds on the fisc. And the wrong of wrongs was left not only untouched but unchallenged. Slavery remained, and the average lot of the slave was no better than in the Rome of Horace, Christian matrons in the east being as cruel mistresses as those of the west in the days before Nero. That Christian credences counted for little in setting up even the species of virtue most esteemed, may be gathered from the Confessions of Augustine. By his own account, what first drew him in his youth to moral reflection and conduct was not the pious teaching of his mother but the writing of Cicero; he was scrupulous as a Manichæan before he became orthodox; and his charges of hypocrisy against some Manichæans merely place the heretical sect on a level with the orthodox. As regarded the weightier matters of morals there could be no vital reform, because there was at work neither an intellectual force nor a self-saving pressure from the wronged orders of society. The ethic which led Origen to make himself a eunuch was not a force for betterment.

A survey of the literature of the fourth and fifth centuries will make equally clear the failure of Christianity to renew the mental life which had been dwindling in the Hellenic world since the days of Alexander, and in the western since those of Augustus. No modern seeker for wisdom or beauty in ancient lore thinks of turning for it to the Greek and Latin writings of the age of established Christianity. Augustine, whose energy was sufficient for a great literary performance, leaves a mass of work out of which two or three treatises only have any truly literary as distinct from an archæological interest; and these are vitiated as compared with good pagan work by their wearisome hysterical pietism no less than by their utter lack of serenity. The Confessions, which might have been a great human document, are reduced by their religious content almost to the plane of the surrounding wilderness of rhetorical theology, whereof a library still subsists, unreadable and unread. Rhetoric, the bane of the decadent pagan literature, infects equally all the Christian writers, giving to the most vehement the ring of inflation and false passion. Literature of artistic or intellectual value was almost at an end. Such Christian poets as Prudentius and Paulinus have indeed merit in their kind; but they could not begin a literary renascence under the conditions set up either by fanatical Christianity or by the worldly spirit which divided with fanaticism the control of the Christian Church and State in the west as in the east. And when the spirit of literature did later revive, it turned with less zest to the pietists named than to their pagan contemporary Claudian, who if not a great poet is yet high among the lesser classics of Rome.

It would seem as if Claudian, coming to the writing of Latin after a Greek education, was partly saved by that circumstance from the artistic fatuity which had become normal among the westerns as among the easterns; the need to think in a new speech vitalising his use of it. But he remained wholly pagan in his creed. And such pagan thinkers as Macrobius and Simplicius, though unoriginal in comparison with those whom they commented, reward attention in many ways better than their contemporaries of the Church. What of permanent appeal there is in the teaching of Augustine comes largely from his early philosophic culture; and Ambrose has hardly anything in the way of serious or philosophic thought which he does not borrow from pagan lore. Bœthius, the last of the ancient philosophers, was a Christian only in name, expounding its orthodox dogma as a lawyer might expound law: when he came to write his consolations in prison he went back to the ancient and universal ethic, putting aside his creed as he might a mask. The vogue of his book in the Dark Ages is the expression of thinking men's satisfaction in a late Latin treatise which brooded gravely on life and death in terms of human feeling and wisdom, with no hint of the formulas of the priest.

On the side of science in particular and education in general the Christian tendency was increasingly repressive. When Christianity was established there were still grammar schools in every considerable town in the empire, and many higher schools in the great cities; and though for long the Christians were fain to use these schools, pagan as they were in character, by reason of their almost purely literary or rhetorical curriculum, the Church gradually let

them die out, never even attempting a Christian system of education, apart from a few theological schools. Nor did the process of extinction of knowledge end there. Early in the fifth century, Theodosius II. forbade all public lecturing by non-official teachers; and a century later Justinian plundered and abolished the philosophical schools at Athens, thus ending the last vestige of the higher intellectual life. Pope Gregory the Great fanatically discouraged literary culture; and in the east it soon became a matter of orthodox rule that the laity should not read the sacred books, the only literature that could well come in their way. Science so-called was practically a synonym for heresy: it was denounced as impious by zealous believers in the third century; and in the sixth we find Cosmas "Indicopleustes," the Indian voyager, a Nestorian Christian, denouncing the pagan doctrine of the roundness of the earth, which he religiously demonstrates to be an oblong plane. Medicine had gone far under pagan auspices, and Antoninus Pius had provided for municipal physicians throughout the empire; but the Christians, seeing heresy in all science, put prayer and exorcism above leechcraft; the temple-schools of the healing God Aesculapius were closed with the rest, and medical like other science virtually died out of Christian hands, to be recovered from old Greek lore by the Saracens. Gregory the Great exhibits the superstition of an ignorant Asiatic. What the world needed above all things was new study and real knowledge in place of rhetoric: the fatality of the Christian system was that it set up the conviction that all vital knowledge was contained in itself. Yet all the while the religious habit of mind, which saw in pious fraud a service to

deity, had almost destroyed the rational conception of truth, so that a thousand years were to elapse before human testimony could return to the standards of Thucydides, or human judgment rise above a gross credulity. Were it only in the west, overrun by barbarism, that the lights of knowledge and art went out, the barbarian invasion might be put as the cause; but the history of Christian Byzantium is the history of an intellectual arrest of a thousand years on the very soil of civilization.

§ 4. *The Social Failure.*

Of the eastern Christian empire as it is left curtailed of more than half its area by the Moslem conquest, the one thing that cannot be predicated is progress or transformation. Here again it would be an error to regard Christianity as the cause of stagnation: the whole political science of antiquity had been markedly conservative; but it must be noted that historic Christianity absolutely endorsed the ideal of fixity. Only conditions of stimulating culture-contract could have preserved a vigorous mental life under its sway; and the condition of Byzantium was unhappily one of almost complete racial and religious isolation. The Byzantium of Justinian and Heraclius is almost the ideal of ossification; its very disorders are normal, the habitual outbreaks of a vicious organism. There is nothing in pagan history to compare with the chronic pandemonium set up in Christian Constantinople by the circus factions of blues and greens, whose mutual massacres in generation after generation outdid the slaughters of many civil wars. As painted

by its own Christian censors, the Byzantine town population of all orders was at least as worthless as that of pagan Rome in its worst imperial days; it realised the ignorance and unprogressiveness of modern China without the Chinese compensations of normal good nature, courtesy, domestic unity, and patient toil. Industry indeed there must have been; it was perhaps the silk industry introduced by Justinian that began the economic salvation of the State; but the law prescribed a system of industrial caste, binding every man, as far as might be, to his father's trade, which must have kept the working populace very much on the level of that of ancient Egypt. Nor can matters have been socially much better in the west, whether in Italy under Byzantine or Lombard rule, or in the new barbarian States, Arian and Catholic. Everywhere the old inequalities of law were rather worsened than cured, and no Christian teacher dreamed of curing them. The ideals of the most earnest among them, as Jerome and Paulinus, began and ended in mere pietism and physical self-mortification.

It is not surprising, then, that all over the Christian world the most salient social result of the creed was the institution of monasticism, a Christian adaptation of a usage long common in religious and down-trodden Egypt. Everything conduced to promote it. The spectacle of constant strife and sensuality in the cities moved suffering souls of the unworldly type to withdraw to solitude or the cloister; all the leading teachers applauded the ideal, while denouncing its abuses; and for multitudes of unfortunate or inferior types, avoiding toil or escaping tyranny, then as later, the life of the monk or even of the hermit, though

poor, was one of relative ease and idleness, greatly preferable to that of the proletary, since all could count on being at least maintained by popular charity, if not enriched by the believers in their sanctity. To these types were added that of the ignorant fanatic, which seems to have been as numerous as that of the slothful, and which under monastic conditions seems to have become more fanatical than ever. Thus some of the best and the worst moral elements, the latter of course immensely predominating, combined to weaken the social fabric, the former by withdrawing their finer personalities from a world that doubly needed them; the latter by withdrawing hands from labour and widening the realm of ignorant faith. Some powerful personalities, as Basil and Chrysostom and Gregory, were bred in the monastic life; but in the main it was a mere impoverishment of civilization. In the critical period of Christian history the monks are often found zealous in works of rabid violence, such as the destruction of pagan temples and Jewish synagogues, and the horrible murder of the pagan girl-philosopher Hypatia, in Alexandria (415); and they too had their furious dogmatic strifes, notably in the fourth and fifth centuries, when those of Egypt constituted themselves the champions of the orthodoxy (then impeached) of Origen, for no clear reason save perhaps the fact of his self-mutilation. But, as Christian historians have remarked, they seem to have done nothing to resist the ruinous onslaught of Islam, which above all things despised monks.

There is reason to believe, finally, that the intellectual as well as the political abjection of the Christian mass in Syria, Egypt, and North Africa made many

of them ready material for Islam, even as sectarian hatreds made others welcome the conqueror, and resent only his toleration of their opponents. Christain faith availed so little to make head against the new faith which assailed it, that we must infer a partial paralysis on the Christian side as a result of Moslem success. Success was the theological proof of divine aid; and many calamities, such as earthquakes, had previously seemed to tell of divine wrath against the Christian world. Such arguments shook multitudes. Numbers apostatised at once; and when the Moslem rule was established from Jerusalem to Carthage, the Christian Church, tolerated only to be humiliated, dwindled to insignificance on its former soil. In the African provinces it absolutely disappeared, in the others it became incapable of moving either Arab or Frank to respect. Nestorian Christianity, already settled in Persia, was specially tolerated by the Saracens, as it had been by the Persians, because of its enmity to Christian Byzantium; but though it continued to subsist it was by toleration and not by strength. The Nestorian clergy and laity throve somewhat as Jews had done in Rome; but they made no headway against Islam, and some of the Asiatic States where they had been numerous fell away wholly to Mohammedanism. Thus was given the historic proof that any religion may be destroyed or degraded by brute force, provided only the brute force be persistent, and efficiently applied. What pagan Rome did not do, for lack of systematic effort or continuous purpose, Islam did with the greatest ease, the purpose and the effort being wholehearted. And when we compare the later civilization of the Saracens with that they overthrew, it is hard

to feel that the world lost by the change. If monotheism had any civilizing virtue as against polytheism, it was the Moslems, not the Christians, who were monotheists; and the Moslem scorn of Christian man-worship and idolatry reproduced the old Christian tone towards paganism. On the side of morals, Moslem polygamy was indeed relatively evil; but on the other hand the giving of alms, so often claimed as a specially Christian virtue, was under Islam an absolute duty; Moslems could not hold Moslems as slaves; Islam knew no priestcraft; and it substantially excluded the common Christian evils of drunkenness and prostitution. Almost the only art carried on by the Byzantines from their pagan ancestors was that of architecture, their churches being often beautiful; and this art, as well as that of working in gold, the Saracens preserved; while it is to their later adoption of the ancient Greek science that the world owes the revival of knowledge after the night of the Dark Ages. Sculpture and painting were already become contemptible in Christian hands; and literature was in not much better case. It is to be noted, too, that the traditional blame of the Goths and Vandals for the disfigurement of ancient Rome is misplaced, the worst wreckers being the generals of Justinian and the inhabitants themselves, always ready to ruin a pagan memorial for the sake of building material.

When finally we seek to realise the aspect of the Hellenistic world in the time of Mohammed, in contrast with that of the age of Pericles; or the Rome of Pope Gregory the Great (590–604) in contrast with that of Hadrian, we are conscious of an immense loss of human faculty for beauty and joy, no less than for action. It is not too much to say that the Christian ideal

of sanctity meant not only self-mortification and sadness but squalor in the individual life. Physical uncleanliness became a Christian virtue; and the mark of a city built in the Christian period came to be the absence of baths. Pagan Greece lives for ever in men's thought as a dream of grace and beauty and enchanted speech; and though behind the shining vision of art and song there lingers immovably a sombre memory of strife and servitude, the art and the song are a deathless gift to mankind. At every summit of its attainment, our civilization looks back to them with an unquenchable envy, an impotent desire, as of a race disinherited. To regain that morning glory of life is the spontaneous yearning of all who have gazed on the distant light of it. But the man who would wish to recreate the Constantinople of Justinian or Heraclius has not yet declared himself. Dream for dream, the child-like creed of the God-crowded Hellas of Pheidias' day, peopled with statues and crowned with temples of glorious symmetry, is an incomparably fairer thing than the tortured dogma of the Byzantine church, visually expressing itself in wretched icons, barbaric trappings, and infinite mummeries of ceremonial; idolatry for idolatry, the adoration of noble statues by chanting bands of youths and maidens can have wrought less harm to head and heart than the prostration of their posterity before the abortions of Byzantine art; superstition for superstition, there is nothing in old Hellene religion, with all its survivals of savage myth, to be compared for moral and mental abjection to the practice of the Christian Greeks, with their pilgrimages to Arabia to kiss Job's dunghill, and their grovelling worship of dead men's bones. Some Christian

historians, seeking a vital test, have concluded that under paganism there was no good "life of the heart"; but whatever may be the modern superiority in this regard, there is none to be discerned in the Christian civilizations which in the seventh century still spoke the classic tongues of paganism.

In the West, where a spiritual power had begun obscurely to acquire a Roman empire which parodied the old, there is indeed a potential superiority predicable for the new. Gregory sending Augustine to convert the Britons is a fairer moral spectacle than that of Cæsar, bent on plunder, seeking to conquer them. But whatever might be the moral merit of a sincere fanaticism like that of Gregory, who trampled down culture as eagerly as he pushed propaganda, the life of too many Popes had already shown that the new Romanism was only to be Cæsarism with a difference, and that for the spiritual as for the temporal empire the great end was gold. Tyranny for tyranny, and power for power, the Rome of Trajan, superb and cruel, is hardly a worse thing than the Rome in which Popes fought with hired bands for their chair, or sat in it through the favour of courtesans; and the Roman populace of the days of Gregory was no worthier than that of the days of Caracalla or of Honorius. "Nothing can give a baser notion of their degradation than their actions," says Milman, describing the conduct of the Romans at Gregory's death, when they had become thoroughly Christianised. As of old, the accident of real merit in the ruler could avail for much in administration; but still the calm Antonines can bear comparison as potentates and men with any wearer of the triple crown.

PART III.—MEDIEVAL CHRISTIANITY.

CHAPTER I.

EXPANSION AND ORGANISATION.

§ 1. *Position in the Seventh Century.*

When the swift triumph of Islam had cut off from Christendom the populations among whom its creed had been evolved, that creed ruled in the Byzantine State; in Italy, still half-imperial, half-Lombardic; in Spain, then under Teutonic rulers; in Frankish Gaul; in parts of southern Germany; in Saxon Britain, of which the conversion was begun by the lesser Augustine under Gregory the Great, after the overthrow of the earlier church by the heathen invaders; and in Ireland, which had been largely Christianised in the fourth and fifth centuries, apparently by Greek or eastern means. In the Moslem world, Christianity existed on sufferance, and chiefly in heretical forms, being Nestorian in Persia and Monophysite in Egypt, as also in Abyssinia; but Christian Europe was now nominally agreed on the main official dogmas.

In the more civilised European States, specific paganism still throve more or less obscurely, both by way of educated antiquarianism and of peasant persistence in old ways; and the Church framed

canons against the latter and treatises against the former. The mass of the population, however, was satisfied with the ample elements of the old system embodied in the new. In the more barbaric States, Christianity was even less of a modifying force than in the others. Like the people of the empire, the barbarians carried on their pagan rites, festivals, and superstitions under the name of Christianity; and whereas the educated world was in a measure forced by its pessimists and pietists to recognise the difference between its documents and its practice, the more primitive races simply translated Christian tradition and theory into the terms of their own life. Save for an exaltation of celibacy, and an inquisition, at once prurient and puerile, into the details of the sexual relation, it in no way changed the plane of their thought and conduct. What it did alter was their political life, inasmuch as the co-ordination of the priesthood made everywhere for the power of the prince, if he had the wit to use it, the church being everywhere shaped as far as might be on the model and the ideal set up by Constantine.

Wherever the Roman empire had been, unless anti-Christian violence has intervened, the church system to this day bears witness to the union of Church and State. In France, for instance, there is still a bishop, as a rule, wherever there was a Roman municipality, and an archbishop wherever there was a provincial capital; and where in imperial territory there were variations in the administration of rural districts—some being under their own magistrates, some under those of neighbouring towns—the church system varied similarly. In the East, rural bishops, or *chorepiscopi*, were common; but in the

West they seem to have prevailed only in the Dark Ages, the general tendency being to give the rank of mere priests to the holders of country benefices, and to make bishops the rulers of dioceses from a civic seat or "cathedral" church. Country parishes, on the other hand, were formed into groups, presided over by an *archipresbyter*, without episcopal rank. The spirit of imperial rule pervaded all church life. Where large landowners under the Christian emperors had sought to resist the centralising system by appointing the priests on their own estates, they were compelled to obtain the approval of the nearest bishop; and when they sought next to do without priests, a law was passed forbidding laymen to meet for worship without an ecclesiastic. This principle was carried wherever the Church went, and rigid subordination was the general result. To secure stability, however, the Church had to rest on a recognised economic interest throughout the priesthood; and the early practice of a communal life for the bishop and his clergy, which was still common in Gaul and Spain in the seventh century, was gradually broken up. The competition of monasticism first forced upon all a stricter rule; and priests living in their bishop's house became known as *canonici regulares*, "canons regular," or under rule—a duplication of terms, since "canon" originally meant "rule," and "canonical" was simply "regular." But the obvious financial advantages, as well as the liberties of the unattached priests, soon made their status the aim of all not devoted to the monastic ideals. The change was furthered by the habit of leaving endowments to individual churches and to individual offices; till at length even in the cathedral towns the canons lived

apart, each with his own revenue, though often dining at a common table; while the country priests necessarily became still more their own masters in the matter of income. Thus arose the "secular clergy," the title of "regular" being restricted to those who lived under a monastic rule—as that of Benedict or that of Augustine; and these in turn came to be classed with monks as distinguished from the others. In addition, there sprang up in the Middle Ages a number of unattached or itinerant priests, as well as private chaplains.

In every order alike, however, an economic interest was sooner or later the ruling motive. Beneficed priests wrought for the church under which they had their income, keeping as much of it as they could, but recognising the need for official union; and the monastic orders in their turn grew wealthy by endowments, and zealous in proportion for the temporal power of the Church. As always, the self-denying and devoted were a minority; but the worldly and the unworldly alike wrought everywhere in the political interests of the kings, who had established and endowed the church to begin with, and who in return were long allowed many liberties in the appointment and control of bishops and priests. A common result was the appointment of lay favourites or benefactors of the king; and bishoprics seem almost as often as not to have been in some degree purchasable. The church, in short, was a social and political function of each State, with the papal system loosely and variably co-ordinating the whole.

§ 2. *Methods of Expansion.*

Every extension of the church being a means of power and revenue to priests, the process was furthered at once by motives of selfishness and by motives of self-sacrifice. In some cases the latter were effectual, as when a pious hermit won repute among barbarians for sanctity, and so acquired spiritual influence; but the normal process of conversion seems to have been by way of appeal to chiefs or kings. When these were convinced that Christianity was to their interest, the baptism of their more docile subjects followed wholesale. Thus ten thousand Angli were claimed as baptised by Augustine in Kent on Christmas Day in the year 597—a transaction which reduced the rite to nullity, and the individuality of the converts to the level of that of animals. In this case there can have been no rational consent. A little later, Heraclius in the East caused multitudes of Jews to be dragged to baptism by force; and the same course was taken in Spain and Gaul. Jews so coerced were only more anti-Christian than before; and wholesale relapses of barbarian converts were nearly as common as the wholesale captures, till the cause of kings won the mastery. Nowhere does the church seem to have grown from within and upward among barbarians as it had originally done in the empire: the process is invariably one of imposition from without and above, by edicts of kings, who supported the missionaries with the sword. As at the outset of the church, there were deadly strifes among the pioneers. The earlier British church having been formed under influences from Ireland, there was such

utter hatred between its remnants and the Romanised church set up by Augustine that, apparently after his death, twelve hundred monks of the older church were massacred at Bangor in one of the wars between the two Christian parties; and the Britons, not unnaturally, refused to have any intercourse with their brethren, regarding them as worse than heathens. The Englishman Boniface, who played a large part (720–755) in the Christianisation of northern Germany, and who in the usual fashion claimed to have baptised a hundred thousand natives in one year, secured the excommunication of several rival bishops of the anti-Roman school; and those who would not accept re-ordination at his hands he sought to have imprisoned or flogged, denouncing them, in the style of the churchman of all ages, as "servants of the devil and forerunners of Antichrist." His authority was established in new districts at the head of an armed force; and when with fifty priests he met his death (755) in Friesland at the hands of heathen natives, he was marching with a troop of soldiers. Even where force was not used, the persuasions offered were of the grossest kind. Thus a friend of Boniface is found advising him to point out to the heathen that the Christians have the bulk and the best of the world, possessing all the rich lands which yield wine and oil, while the pagans are now confined to the coldest and most barren regions. No religion was ever more unspiritually propagated.

Under Charlemagne, Christian missionary methods left those of Islam in the rear. For the subjection of the still free Saxons, between the Baltic and the borders of Thuringia and Hesse, he needed the aid

of the church's organisation; and they, realising the state of the case, for the most part refused to be baptised. In his wars with them, accordingly, he decreed that those who rejected the gospel should be put to death. As the wars lasted thirty-three years, the number of the slain must be left to imagination. The survivors were finally bribed into belief by a restoration of their local rights, and by being freed from tribute to the king. They do not seem, however, to have been freed from the exactions of the church, which, according to the testimony of Charlemagne's adviser, Alcuin, had been a main cause of the exasperation of the Saxons against it. Among those exactions Alcuin mentions not only tithes—which had now become a recognised form of church revenue—but the infliction of many penalties for moral and ecclesiastical offences. Such exactions the monarch endorsed; and he it was who enforced the payment of tithes.

King and priest were thus natural allies as against the freemen or the chieftains in each territory; and the advance of the church was bloody or bloodless according as the king was able to enforce his will. In the Scandinavian countries the founding of Christianity was a life-and-death struggle, lasting in all for some two hundred and fifty years (820–1075), between the local liberties, bound up with pagan usages, and the centralising system of the church. Again and again the church was overthrown, with the king who championed it; and the special ferocity of the marauding vikings against churchmen wherever they went seems to have been set up by their sense of the church's monarchic function. The fact that many priests were ex-serfs made them the more

obnoxious; and they in turn would strive the more zealously for the church's protecting power. But the church's political work did not end with the humbling of the vikings, as such, at the hands of the kings who finally mastered them: it endorsed the aggressive imperialism of the Danish king Knut as it had done that of Rome; and never till the time of the Crusades does the ostensible universality of the church seem to have checked the old play of racial hatreds and the normal lust of conquest. So clearly did Charlemagne realise the political use of the church that, while he imposed it everywhere in his own dominions, he vetoed its extension to Denmark, where it would be a means of organising a probably hostile power, many of the stubborn Saxons having fled thither. From the moment of its establishment it had been stamped with the principle of political autocracy; and only when its own mounting power and wealth made it a world-State in itself did it restrain, in its own interest, the power of kings. In the earlier stages, king and church supported each other for their own sakes; and it was as a political instrument, whose value had been proved in the Roman Empire, that the church was sooner or later accepted by the barbarian kings. All the while popes and prelates complained bitterly that many of the converts thus won were baptised and rebaptised, yet continued to live as heathens, slaying priests and sacrificing to idols. When, however, open heathenism was beaten down, the combined political and religious prestige of the Christian priest gave him a hold over the multitude, forever superstitious, such as those of the heathen times had never wielded save in Gaul. To the new regal tyranny was added that of the Church.

When the Servians, who had been nominally Christianised under the rule of Byzantium in the eighth century, regained their independence in the ninth, they significantly renounced Christianity; and only after re-conquest were they again "converted."

To the general rule of propagation by regal edict or by bloodshed there were a few partial exceptions. Vladimir, the first Christian king of the Russians (980), destroyed the old monuments and images in the usual fashion; but under the auspices of his wife, the sister of the Byzantine emperor, Greek missionaries set up many schools and churches, and the kingdom seems to have been bloodlessly Christianised within three generations. It accordingly remained Christian under the two and a half centuries of Mongol rule, from 1223. Elsewhere the conversion of the Slavs was a process of sheer monarchic violence, as in Scandinavia. Always it was the duke or king who was "converted," and always his propaganda was that of the sword. Through three reigns (870–936) heathen Bohemia was bedevilled by dukes who coerced their subjects with the church's help: a pagan prince who led a successful revolt, but was overthrown by a German invasion, lives in history as Boleslav the Cruel; and an equally cruel successor, who with German help used the same means on behalf of Christianity, figures as Boleslav the Pious (967–999). The same process went on in Poland; the converted duke (967), backed by his German overlords, seeking to suppress pagan worship with violence and meeting violent resistance. So among the Wends, who were also under German vassalage, the missionary was seen to be the tool of the tyrant, and the cause of paganism was identified

with that of national independence. After generations of savage struggle, Gottschalk, the pious founder of the Wendish empire, was overthrown (1066) and put to death with torture. So in Hungary, where king Stephen (997–1038) combined slaughter with better propaganda, the king's death was followed by a desperate pagan revolt, which was twice renewed under his son.

Century after century, expansion proceeded on the same lines. The Finns, conquered in the twelfth century by a Christian king of Sweden, were still persistently pagan in the thirteenth, and were bloodily coerced accordingly. In the conversion of the Slavonic Pomeranians in the twelfth century, armed force, headed by the duke, was needed to secure wholesale baptisms after the fashion of Augustine and Boniface; the people of Lübeck, on the opportunity of an emperor's death, revolted in favour of paganism and independence; and the pagans of the isle of Rügen were Christianised in mass by Danish conquest (1168). It is recorded by the biographer of St. Otho that the Pomeranians expressly rejected Christianity on the score of its cruelty, saying, "among the Christians are thieves and robbers [unknown among the heathen Slavs]: Christians crucify men and tear out eyes and do all manner of infamies: be such a religion far from us." The attempt to convert Livonia by preaching was an absolute failure; two crusades had to be set on foot by the Pope and the surrounding Christians to crush its paganism (circa 1200); and finally an "Order of the Sword" had to be organised to hold the religious ground. A little later, two "Orders of Teutonic Knights" in succession were established to conquer and convert the heathen Prussians; and after sixty

years of murderous and ruinous warfare, "a broken remnant, shielded in some measure by the intervention of the popes, were induced to discontinue all the heathen rites, to recognise the claims of the Teutonic Order, and to welcome the instruction of the German priests." Another remnant, utterly unsubduable, sought refuge with the heathens of Lithuania.

The summary of seven hundred years of Christian expansion in northern Europe is that the work was in the main done by the sword, in the interests of kings and tyrants, who supported it, as against the resistance of their subjects, who saw in the church an instrument for their subjection. Christianity in short was as truly a religion of the sword as Islam. When the Mongols conquered part of Russia in 1223 they not only left the Christians full religious liberty but let the priests go untaxed; and similarly the Turks left to the Bulgarians their faith, their lands, and their local laws. Christianity gave no such toleration; the lands of the heathen Slavs and Prussians being distributed among their German conquerors. The heathen, broadly speaking, were never persuaded, never convinced, never won by the appeal of the new doctrine: they were either transferred by their kings to the church like so many cattle or beaten down into submission after generations of resistance and massacre. For a long time after the German conquest any Slav found away from home was liable to be executed on the spot, or killed like a wild beast by any Christian who would. And centuries after the barbarian heathenism of Europe was ostensibly drowned in blood, Christian Spain, having overthrown the Moslem Moors, proceeded in the same fashion to dragoon Moslems and Jews into the true faith, baptising in droves those who yielded

or dissembled, and driving out of the country myriads more who would not submit. The misery and the butchery wrought from first to last are unimaginable. If the Spanish conquests of Mexico and Peru, with their church-blessed policy of suppressing heathenism, be added to the record, the totality of evil becomes appalling; for the Spanish priest Las Casas estimated the total destruction of native life at twelve millions. All this slaughter took place by way of "expansion," and is exclusive of the further record of the slaughters wrought by the Church for the suppression of heresy within its established field. It is a strange prepossession that, in face of such a retrospect, habitually concentrates Christian thought on the remote and transient persecutions of Christianity by ancient paganism. If the blood shed on the score of religion by paganism and Christianity respectively be carefully estimated, the former might say to the latter, in the words of the latter-day heathen king of the Zulus who was crushed by an ostentatiously Christian statesmanship: "The blood shed in my reign was, to the blood shed since, as an ant in a pool of water."

§ 3. *Growth of the Papacy.*

One marked result of the triumph of Islam in the east and of barbarism in the west was the growth of the Roman Papacy as the supreme ecclesiastical power in Latin Christendom. So long as an emperor had his seat in Italy, the bishop or patriarch of Rome was kept in subordination to the State; and at Constantinople the subordination of the patriarch never ceased. But even in the period from the reconquest of Italy

under Justinian to the final renunciation of Byzantine rule, though the Roman patriarchs depended on the emperor to ratify their election, the curtailment of the eastern empire, narrowing as it did the range of the eastern Church, weakened that relatively to the western; while the absence of local monarchy left the way open for an ecclesiastical rule, calling itself theocratic. Had the Italian kingdom of Theodoric subsisted, the development would certainly have been different. As it was, even he, an Arian, was called in to control the riotous strifes of papal factions in Rome.

It belonged to all the patriarchates, as to all bishoprics, that their tenants should magnify their office; and even in the second century we have seen signs of an ambition in the Roman bishop to rule the rest of the Church. Already, presumably, there existed the gospel text: "Thou art Petros, and upon this rock (*petra*) I will build my church"—an interpolation probably made in the Roman interest, and sure to sustain a Roman ambition for general headship. But as late as the fifth century some codices seem to have read simply "Thou hast said"; (σὺ εἶπας instead of οὐ εἶ Πέτρος); and in the third we find Cyprian of Carthage insisting on the independence of his church while admitting the ceremonial primacy of Rome—a proof that the Roman claim was being pushed. In the fourth century, Pope Damasus sought to induce the eastern bishops to go to Rome for the settlement of disputes as to certain eastern bishoprics; but was sardonically admonished by a unanimous eastern council to alter his attitude. While the old empire subsisted, the Roman bishop could get no further than his old ceremonial status as holding the primary see in order of dignity. Neither

the emperor nor the patriarch at Constantinople would consent to vest any supreme authority in the bishop of the ancient and relatively effete capital; and Theodosius definitely constituted the patriarch of Constantinople the equal of him of Rome (381), though ceremonially second to him. At the same time, the patriarch of Constantinople was set above those of Antioch and Alexandria, a step which promoted the worst of the later schisms and so helped to lose Egypt and Syria. On every side, the normal egoisms and racial instincts can thus be seen determining the fortunes of the faith. The fling of the Greek Basil at Rome, "I hate the pride of that church," is typical. Even while the Roman bishop was pushing his claims to primacy, the see of Constantinople, backed by the emperor, was taking province after province from the Roman jurisdiction; and in 451 the Council of Chalcedon, with the support of the eastern emperor, decreed that the bishop of "New Rome" should enjoy equal honour and privilege with his rival. At the same period the bishop of Jerusalem, claiming primacy in his turn, contrived to gain ground as against those of Antioch and Alexandria. Each patriarchate fought for its own hand. The use of the special title of "Papa" by him of Rome was probably an imitation of Mithraism, in the hierarchy of which the chief priest was "Father of Fathers," as the God was "Father Mithra," and, like Attis, probably called *Papa*. In the Eastern church the name became general, all priests being "popes."

In the history of the Papacy, it is the two early bishops most distinguished for widening the power of the church that alone have won the title of "Great," to wit, Leo I. (440–461) and Gregory I. (590–604), of

whom the first began to build up the Church's local patrimony on the fall of the western empire, and the second to establish her spiritual reign in the north. It is under the latter that the destiny of the Roman see as the head of the western churches begins clearly to reveal itself. The patriarch of Constantinople of that day took to himself the title of Œcumenical or Universal; and Gregory, whose predecessors had aimed at that very status, pronounced the claim blasphemous, antichristian, and diabolical. A few years later, he was securing through the lesser Augustine his own supremacy over the previously independent churches of Britain. He even seems to have cringed to the usurping Byzantine emperor Phocas in order to get him to veto the claim of his rival, a concession which appears to have been granted to Boniface III. in 606. Still the papacy had to fight hard for its claims in Britain, Gaul, and Spain; and towards the end of the seventh century Bishop Julian of Toledo is found rating Benedict II. for ignorance and jealousy. As Julian was nevertheless sainted, we may infer that the jealousies of rival candidates for the papacy, leading to changes of policy, often checked its political growth. But events forced a policy. In the eighth century the iconoclastic emperors quarrelled with the papacy (under Gregory II.) as well as with Greek orthodoxy; whereupon the northern Lombards sought to become masters of what remained of imperial territory in Italy; and of a series of eight or nine Popes (730–772) the majority were fain to call in the help of the Franks. Charles Martel did not actively respond; but his son Pepin did twice, and as victor presented to the Pope (754) the sovereignty of the exarchate, receiving in return the pontiff's

sanction to depose the last feeble Merovingian king, in whose name the house of Pepin had ruled. The end of the new departure was the conquest of the Lombards by Charlemagne in 774, and the establishment in 800 of the new "Holy Roman Empire," wherein the Pope was the spiritual colleague of the emperor.

Hitherto the bishop of Rome had been popularly elected like every other, and subject like every other to acceptance by the emperor. But after Pope Zacharias (741–752) the eastern emperor was ignored; and Charlemagne was crowned as the successor, by Roman decision, not of the old emperors of the west, but of the line of emperors which in the east had never ceased. Constantine VI., who had just been deposed by his mother Irene (797), was the sixty-seventh "Roman" emperor in order from Augustus, and Charlemagne was enrolled in the west as the sixty-eighth. He even received, with the diplomatic assent of Haroun Alraschid, the keys of the Holy Sepulchre from the Patriarch of Jerusalem—an empty but suggestive honour. It was thus inevitable that the new imperial line should sooner or later seek to hold power over the papacy as the old had claimed to do; and Charlemagne made his force felt very much as Constantine had done, going even further in the way of appointing bishops, and lecturing the pope at times with the consciousness of virtual supremacy. So long as the emperor, needing and using the services of the church to organise his administration, enriched the hierarchy on all hands, enforcing tithes and protecting the entire priesthood against lay turbulence, his pretensions were naturally allowed. Everything depended on the strength of the ruler; and already under Charlemagne's good but weak son Louis we find many

of the bishops, backed by the pope, supporting the emperor's rebellious sons and claiming to depose him. About 875, again, we find Pope John VIII. not only hectoring the weak Charles the Fat but claiming the right to choose the emperor. Until, however, there began to rise in Italy a new and vigorous civilisation, the papacy was on the whole discreetly subject to the ratification of the northern emperors; and this is perhaps the period of maximum demoralisation and dishonour in its history; its economic evolution being very much on the lines of that of the original Church in the centuries from its establishment by Constantine till the humiliation of the empire by the Moslems. Intellectually, the papacy had no prestige within the Church. It was in 824 that a council of Frankish bishops at Paris, following on previous declarations, denounced as absurdity the decrees of the Pope enjoining the worship of images. Even when the Pope Gregory IV. entered France to support the bishops who backed the rebellious sons of Louis, and threatened to excommunicate those on the emperor's side, the latter treated him with indignant contempt.

It is in this period, however, that there begins the process of documentary fraud by which the Church, wielding the power of the pen, gradually circumvented that of the sword. Centuries before, the Roman see had made use of forged documents in its disputes with Constantinople; and the Greeks of the day declared such forgeries to be a special Roman industry. As a matter of fact, most of the early ecclesiastical forgeries had been of eastern origin: for instance the so-called Apostles' Creed and the Apostolical Constitutions. Of these the first grew up fortuitously in the third century, and received its name after it won currency. Only in

the later middle ages was it adopted by the Latin Church. The Constitutions again were a deliberate compilation; and the Roman Church had invented nothing on the same scale. But in the ninth century there was trumped-up among the Frankish bishops, under the name of Isidore (ostensibly the popular encyclopedist of Seville, d. 636), a collection of professedly ancient but really spurious papal decretals, partly proceeding on previous practice, but greatly developing it as regarded the local independence of bishops and their right of appeal to Rome. The original motive of the fraud was local episcopal interest, the bishops having endless causes of grievance against their archbishops, kings, and lay lords. But Pope Nicholas I. (858–867) adroitly adopted the forged decretals, professing to have had ancient copies of them, and thenceforth they were made the basis of the papal claims wherever political circumstances gave a good opportunity. The bishops, being thus delivered over to the papacy, lost much more than they gained. A common use now made of the growing papal power was to give monasteries an exemption from the local bishop's rule; and as the monks in general at this period had a higher character for sanctity than the bishops, who were often extremely unreverend, local sympathy was apt to go with the former, and with the pope, whose distant misdeeds were little known to the laity.

As in previous ages, nevertheless, the disorders of the papacy itself greatly hampered its advance. In the period from John VIII. to Leo IX. (1048) six popes were deposed, two murdered, and one mutilated; prolonged contests for the chair were frequent; and in the main it was disposed of by factions of

the Roman and Italian nobility. For a time the counts of Tuscany made it hereditary in their family; and once a Roman courtesan of the higher order decided the election, by help of the general worthlessness of the Roman electoral populace, who, having neither commerce nor industry, were fed by papal doles as of old they had been by the emperors. In the tenth century, the papacy had reached its nadir. The general expectation, based on the Apocalypse and other Christian tradition, that the world would end with the year 1000, seems to have turned the thoughts of the more serious away from worldly questions; while the more reckless types, lawless at best in that age, exhibited something of the wild licence seen at times in cities stricken by pestilence, and ships about to sink. When the dreaded year was past, riot was even quickened; but in the eleventh century a moral instinct began slowly to assert itself. The elections to the papacy had become so scandalous and ruinous —three pretenders claiming the chair at once—that the clergy themselves conceded to the emperor Henry III., in the year 1047, the right to appoint popes; and he used his power four times with judgment and success.

Naturally, however, the reform strengthened the papacy rather than the emperor. Pope Nicholas II., acting on the advice of his powerful secretary, the monk Hildebrand, who was to be one of his successors, decreed (1059) that the election of all bishops should lie with the local "chapters" and the pope; and that the election of the pope should in future be made by the seven cardinal bishops of the Roman district, with the assent first of the cardinal priests and deacons of the Roman churches, and next of the

laity; the choice to be ratified by Henry IV., then a minor, or by such of his successors as should obtain the same privilege. Yet on the death of Nicholas, Hildebrand procured the election and consecration of Alexander II. without waiting for any ratification; and when he himself became Pope as Gregory VII. (1073) he was on the alert for his famous struggle with Henry over the claim of the temporal power to appoint bishops. Standing on the forged decretals, with an almost maniacal belief in his divine rights, he claimed as pope not only the sole power to confirm bishops but the power to take or give the possessions of all men as he would; and he threatened deposition to any king who dared to gainsay him. It was in the course of the struggle with Henry, by the use of the now common weapon of excommunication, that he reduced the emperor to his historic act of self-abasement (1077) at Canossa.

The circumstances were in the main in the pope's favour, Henry being rebelled against in Germany, and Gregory being well able to manipulate disaffection. At the same time, Gregory's strenuous efforts to "reform" the church by forcing celibacy on the entire priesthood had set against him multitudes of the Italian and northern clergy, married and otherwise; and these were indignant at Henry's surrender. Stimulated by their protests, and by the sympathy of various kings whom the pope had arrogantly menaced, he took heart, put down his rebels and rivals at home, and marched in force into Italy, where he met almost no resistance and was crowned by the antipope Clement III., whom he and his party had appointed. Gregory, besieged by his own flock in the castle of St. Angelo, called in his late-made ally the Norman

Robert Guiscard, Duke of Sicily, who in releasing him burnt much of the city, and, after a sack and massacre, sold most of the remaining inhabitants as slaves. Everywhere the Pope's cause was lost, and he died defeated, in exile at Salerno under Norman protection, hated by both priests and people as the bringer of slaughter and misery on Germany and Italy alike. The reforming pontiff had wrought far more evil than his most sinful predecessors, and still the church was not reformed.

Henry, rebelled against by his sons, died broken-hearted like his enemy; and for half a century the strife over "lay investitures" was carried on by popes and emperors. The papacy had thus become the evil genius at once of Italy and of Germany, entering into and intensifying every Italian feud, and giving to German feudalism a fatal ground of combat for centuries. Out of all the strife the papacy made profit. When the war of the investitures was over, it built up the Decretum of the monk Gratian, a code embodying the Isidorean frauds with others, such as the gross pretence that St. Augustine had declared the Decretals to be of the same status with the canonical scriptures. The war, meantime, had ended in a compromise from which the papacy substantially gained. The result was to turn it ere long into a vast system of financial exploitation. Every evil in the way of simony and corruption against which Hildebrand had revolted was further developed under papal auspices. The people lost all power of electing their bishops; and the rich chapters, on whom the right devolved, became the field of simony for the nobles; while the pope drew from the sale of his ratifications an immense revenue. So rapid was the effect of the new relation that by the

middle of the twelfth century the bulk of the current literature of Europe, serious and satirical, was bitterly hostile to Rome, which now impressed instructed men chiefly as a great machine for extortion. While the church officially denounced usury, its own usurers were everywhere drawing interest from prelates who had had to borrow money to buy their investitures. The pretence of making the clergy "unworldly" by enforced celibacy was under such circumstances not edifying. Needless to say, while clerical marriage could be officially put down, clerical concubinage was not.

The strength of the papacy as against its many enemies lay (1) in the strifes of States and nations, in which the pope could always intervene; (2) in the feeling of serious men that a central power was needed to control strife and tyranny; (3) in the compiled system of canon law, which expanded still further the code of the Decretals and of Gratian, and constantly exalted the papal power; (4) in the orders of preaching friars, who acted as papal emissaries, and kept in partial discredit the local clergy everywhere; and (5) in the power of the pope to appeal to the worst motives of ignorant believers. Thus at the beginning of the thirteenth century Innocent III., a zealous champion of the papal power, was able in the teeth of the common hostility of educated men to evoke an immense outburst of brutal fanaticism by offering indulgences, spiritual and temporal, to all who would join in a crusade of massacre against the Albigensian and other heretics of Languedoc, where the Paulician and other anti-clerical doctrines had spread widely. Twenty years of hideous bloodshed and demoralization went far to create an atmosphere

in which criticism could not breathe; and the whole evocation of the eastern Crusades, both before and after this period, was carried on by the popes with a clear perception of the gain to their authority from the armed consensus of Christendom under their appeal, on the proffer of indulgences. They had hoped to extend their rule over the East, Christian and paynim; but though this dream came to nothing they were nonetheless aggrandised by the effort. The revived pretensions to dispose of all unclaimed territory on the globe, to depose heretic princes, and to confer sovereignties, were all reinforced.

When the Crusades had ceased, the papal curia, growing ever more exacting, began to draw all manner of yearly dues from churchmen throughout its jurisdiction, so that whereas in the thirteenth century it had only one *auditor cameræ*, in 1370 the pope had more than twenty, and every cardinal had a number in addition, they living like their superior by traffic in privileges. Under Gregory XI. (1370–78), seven bishops were excommunicated by one order for failure to pay their dues. Complaint was universal; but the vested interests made reform impossible. When, therefore, the Renaissance gradually gained ground against all obstacles, and masses of men became capable of judging the papacy in the light of history and reason as well as of its own code, it was inevitable that as soon as local economic interests became sufficiently marked, an institution which was everywhere an economic burden should incur an economic revolution.

In the meantime, the papacy had possessed itself of the power of life and death in the intellectual as well as in the religious sphere. The power it

arrogated to itself under the false Isidorean Decretals carried implicitly if not explicitly the attribute of infallibility. To pronounce doctrines true or false had anciently been the function of councils; it now became the function of the pope, who thus treated councils exactly as kings later treated parliaments. Of old, successive popes had notoriously declared for contrary dogmas; many had contradicted themselves; and down to the thirteenth century there had been a score of papal schisms, all of which were surpassed by those of the fourteenth century; but that reflection put no check on later decisions on the most momentous problems. The religion which began in private dissidence from Jewish and pagan orthodoxies had become the most iron dogmatism the world had ever seen; and the whole system of Christian credence had come to turn on the fiat of one man. At his sole veto the sciences must be dumb; and to him must come for sanction those who would found new schools. The faith that had begun as "liberty from the yoke of the law" had come to elevate the negation of mental liberty into a principle of universal polity, translating into the inner life the despotism which the older Rome had placed on the outer. Latin Christianity had thus duplicated on the one hand the development of ancient Gaulish Druidism, wherein the priests were a sacred and ruling caste and the arch-Druid semi-divine, and on the other hand the evolution of the ancient Egyptian system, under which latterly the priesthood compelled the king to obtain the approbation of the sacred statues before taking any public step, till at length "the true master of Egypt was the Premier Prophet of the Theban Ammon," interpreter of the God, and

priest also of the mediatorial Son-God Khonsu. In all cases alike the sociological causation is transparent from first to last; and equally clear are the special conditions which prevented the Holy Roman Empire from following to the end the path trodden by ancient Egyptian and Roman imperialism.

CHAPTER II.

RELIGIOUS EVOLUTION AND STRIFE.

§ 1. *Growth of Idolatry and Polytheism.*

By the seventh century all that idolatry had meant for the early Christists was reproduced within the Christian Church in east and west. There was nothing, to begin with, in the inner life of the populace in the Christian period that could keep them from the kinds of belief natural to the multitude in pagan times. Only under the stress of a zealous movement of reform, backed up by fanatical power, had image-worship ever been put down for a single nation, as among the Persians and later Jews; and only the original Jewish taboo, backed by the Jewish sacred books, could have kept Christism anti-idolatrous for any length of time after it had passed beyond the sphere of Jewish proselytism. After it had become a State religion, the adoption of images was as necessary to its popularity as the adoption of pagan festivals and rites. Images of martyrs and holy men deceased seem to have been first venerated; and when the bones of such were held to have miraculous virtue, and their spirits were believed to haunt their tombs, it was impossible that their effigies should not come to have similar repute. Dust from Palestine or other holy places, again, was early regarded as having magical virtue—a permitted belief which prepared the way for

others. So with the figure of the Christ. From the first, the sign of the cross was held to be potent against evil spirits; and Helena, the mother of Constantine, gave an irresistible vogue to the worship of what was alleged to be the true cross, and to have worked miraculous cures. As early as the fourth century the Christians at Paneas in Palestine seem to have taken an old statue of a male and a female figure as representing Jesus healing the believing woman; and in the sixth century paintings on linen, held to have been miraculously made by the face of the Saviour, began to be revered. Being so different from pagan statues, the "idols" of Jewish aversion, they readily passed the barrier of the traditional veto on idolatry. Here again, however, the lead came from paganism, as we know from Juvenal that many painters in his day "lived upon Isis," then the fashionable foreign deity at Rome. Crucifixes and images of all kinds inevitably followed. Valens and Theodosius passed laws forbidding pictures and icons of Christ; but such laws merely emphasized an irrepressible tendency. As for Mary, her worship seems from the first to have been associated with that of old statues of a nursing Goddess-Mother, and the statues followed the cult, some black statues of Isis and Horus being worshipped to this day as representing Mary and Jesus.

When an image was once set up in a sacred place, there soon came into play the old belief, common to Egyptians and Romans, that the spirit of the being represented would enter the statue. Hence all prayers to saints were addressed wherever possible to their images, and the same usage followed the introduction of images of Jesus and the Virgin. And while the

Theodosian code contained laws prohibiting on pain of death the placing of wreaths on pagan statues and the burning of incense before them, the Christian populace within a century was doing those very things to the statues of saints. In the same way the use of holy water, which in the time of Valentinian was still held un-christian, became universal in the church a century or two later. Images could not well be left out. The old Judaic conception of the supreme being was indeed too strong to permit of his being imaged; though in the fourth century the Audæans, a Syrian sect of a puritan cast, held that the deity was of human shape, and were accordingly named Anthropomorphites; but the orthodox insistence on the human form of Jesus was a lead to imagè-making. Thus for the Moslems the eastern Christians were idolators as well as polytheists; and the epistles of Gregory the Great show him to have zealously fostered the use of miraculous relics and sacred images in the west. Professing to condemn the worship of images, he defended their use against Bishop Selenus of Marseilles, who ejected them from his church. One of Gregory's specialties in relics was the chain of St. Paul, from which filings could be taken daily without diminishing the total bulk. It was presumably while all pagan usages were still familiar that the Italian Christians adopted the custom of painting the statues of saints red, in the common pagan fashion, as they did the old custom of carrying the images in procession. For the rest, they had but to turn to the lore of the pagan temples for examples of statues brought from heaven, statues which worked miracles, statues which spoke, wept, perspired, and bled—all of which prodigies became canonical in Christian idolatry.

Some scrupulous and educated Christians, such as Epiphanius and Augustine, had naturally set their faces against such a general reversion to practical idolatry, just as many educated pagans had done on philosophical grounds; and the council of Elvira in the fourth century condemned the admission of pictures into churches, but without any lasting effect. In the eighth century, when it could no longer be pretended that Christian images served merely for edification, the Greek emperor Leo the Isaurian began the famous iconoclastic movement in the east. It is probable that he was influenced by Saracen ideas, with which he often came in contact; though it has been held that his motive was mainly political, the local worship of images having weakened the central authority of the Church. But after some generations of struggle and fluctuation, despite the ready support given to iconoclasm by many bishops, the throne reverted to orthodoxy, and idolatry thenceforth remained normal in the Greek as in the Latin Church. The one variation from pagan practice lay in the substitution of pictures and painted wooden images or *icons* for the nobler statues of past paganism, with which indeed Christian art could not pretend for a moment to compete.

In the west, though the iconoclastic emperors met from the popes not sympathy but intense hostility, leading soon to the severance of Rome from the empire, we find in the ninth century a remarkable opposition to image-worship on the part of Claudius bishop of Turin, and Agobard bishop of Lyons, both of whom show a surprising degree of rationalism for their age. Claudius opposed papal claims as well as saint-worship and image-worship, and when condemned

by a council of bishops called them asses; and Agobard opposed all the leading superstitions of his day, even going so far as to pronounce the theory of plenary inspiration an absurdity. As both men were born in Spain there is reason to suspect that they like Leo had been influenced by the higher Saracen thought of the time. In any case, their stand was vain; and though the northern nations, mainly perhaps by reason of their backwardness in the arts, were slow to follow the Italian lead, a century or two sufficed to make the whole Latin Church devoutly image-worshipping. At no time, of course, had any part of it been otherwise than boundlessly credulous as to miracles of every order, and as to the supernatural virtue of relics of every species; and both, accordingly, abounded on all hands. The average mass of Christendom was thus on the same religious and psychological plane as pagan polytheism.

Polytheistic, strictly speaking, Christianity had been from the first, the formula of the Trinity being no more truly monotheistic for the new faith than it had been for ancient Egypt; and the mere belief in an Evil Power being a negation of monotheism. But when saints came to be prayed to at separate shrines, and every trade had its saint-patron, the Christian system was both theoretically and practically as polytheistic as that of classic Greece, where Zeus was at least as truly the Supreme God as was the Father for Christians. And in the elevation of Mary to Goddesshood even the formal semblance of monotheism was lost, for her worship was in the main absolute. The worship, indeed, was long established before she received technical divinisation from the Church, such Fathers as Epiphanius and Augustine having too

flatly condemned her early worship to permit of a formal declaration to the contrary. But in the thirteenth century, St. Bonaventura, who expressly maintained that the same reverence must be paid to the Virgin's image as to herself—a doctrine established in the same period by Thomas Aquinas in regard to Christ—arranged a Psalter in which *domina* was substituted for *dominus* (*in te domina speravi*); and this became the note of average Catholicism. In the twelfth century began the dispute as to the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin—the doctrine, that is, of *her* supernatural birth—on which in later ages the Dominicans and Franciscans fought a bitter and obstinate battle, the latter affirming and the former denying the dogma. After seven centuries of temporising, the Papacy has in recent times endorsed it (1854); but for a thousand years it has been implicit in the ritual of the Catholic Church.

It is not generally known among Protestants that the deification of Joseph has long been in course of similar evolution. In the fifteenth century, Saint Teresa seems to have regarded him as the "plenipotentiary" of God (= Jesus), obtaining from the deity in heaven whatever he asked, as he had done on earth according to the Apocrypha. The cult has never been very prominent; but the latter-day litany of St. Joseph treats him as at least the equal of the Virgin. "The devotion to him," says Cardinal Newman, "is comparatively of late date. When once it began, men seemed surprised that it had not been thought of before; and now they hold him next to the Blessed Virgin in their religious affection and veneration." It had of course been dogmatically retarded by the insistence on the virginity of Mary. But Gerson, one

of the most distinguished theologians of the fourteenth century, is credited by modern Catholics with having suggested the recognition of a second or created Trinity of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. And seeing that Joseph in the popular medieval representations of the Advent Mystery is a constant figure, it is inferrible that for the multitude he had practically a divine status. The process is strictly in keeping with religious evolution in general; and the official apotheosis of Joseph may one day take place.

§ 2. *Doctrines of the Eucharist, Purgatory, and Confession.*

In the first ages of the Church, the notion of the divinity of the "body and blood" of the communion meal was vague and undefined. The partakers certainly regarded the consecrated bread and wine as carrying some supernatural virtue, since they took away portions for medicinal use; but they thought of the meal very much as devout pagans thought of one of the same kind in their mysteries or temple ritual. When their ritual phraseology was challenged as giving colour to the charge of cannibalism, the Fathers seem always to have explained that the terms were purely figurative; and such was the doctrine laid down by Augustine. But when pagan culture had passed away, and there were none in the barbarised West to challenge the Church as such, the strange literalness of the original liturgy set up the stranger belief that what was eaten in the eucharist was by "transubstantiation" the actual flesh and blood of the God-Man. Where such a belief was possible, it was the special

interest of the priesthood to make the affirmation. A stupendous miracle, they claimed, was worked every time the eucharist was administered; but it was worked through the priest. He and he only could bring it about; and thus the central mystery and prodigy of the faith, the command of its most essential ministry, was a clerical monopoly. The economic and spiritual centre of gravity of the entire system was fixed in the priestly order.

Under such a dominating conception, Christianity was for the majority a religion neither of faith nor of works: it was a religion of sacerdotal magic. Not he that believed, still less he that loved his neighbour, but he only that received the mystic rite at consecrated hands, was to be saved. Moral teaching there might be, but more than ever it was supererogatory. Already in the fourth century the sacerdotal quality of the rite was defined by the practice of solemnly "elevating" the wine and the *hostia* or sacrifice, as the bread was termed, before every distribution; and it had become common to administer it two or three times a week. Thus the *missa* or Mass, as it had come to be termed (presumably from the formula of dismissal, *Ite, missio est*, corrupted into *Missa est*—another pagan detail), had passed from the status of a periodical solemnity to that of a frequent service; and the rite was developed by the addition of chants and responses till it became the special act of Christian worship. The "symbols" were thus already far on the way to be worshipped; and at the beginning of the seventh century Gregory the Great enacted that the slightest irregularities in their use should be atoned for by penances. Thus "if a drop from the cup should fall on the altar, the ministering priest

must suck up the drop and do penance for three days; and the linen cloth which the drop touched must be washed three times over the cup, and the water in which it is washed be cast into the fire."

In various other ways the traditional practice was modified. Originally a "supper," it was frequently partaken of after the *Agapæ* or love feasts; but in the fourth century the irrepressible disorders of those assemblages led to their being officially discountenanced, and they gradually died out. Soon the Mass in the churches became a regular morning rite, and the eucharist was taken fasting. After Leo the Great, in the Roman services, it was even administered several times in the day. Finally, in or before the eleventh century, the priesthood, from motives either of economy or of sobriety, began to withhold the wine-cup from communicants, and to reserve it for the priests—a practice which Leo the Great had denounced as heretical. The official argument seems to have been that "the body must include the blood," and that the miracle which turned the bread into flesh created the divine blood therein. One of the most popular miracle stories was to the effect that when once a Jew stabbed a Host, it bled; and the Host in question was long on exhibition. Of older date, apparently, is the administration of the bread in the form of a wafer, this being admittedly an imitation either of the ancient pagan usage of consecrating and eating small round cakes in the worship of many deities, or of the Jewish unleavened bread of the Passover. It may, indeed, have come through Manichæism, which at this point followed Mazdean usage; and as the Manichæans also had the usage of bread without wine, it may be that both practices

came from them in the medieval period. But as the priestly practice of turning round at the altar was taken direct from ancient paganism, with the practice of shaving the head, it is likely that the wafer was also.

The rite thus settled being a *conditio sine qua non* of church membership and spiritual life, it became the basis of the temporal power of the church. Without it there was no "religion"; and as the communicant in order to retain his rights must make confession to the priest at least once a year, the hold of the church on the people was universal. Any one rejecting its authority could be excommunicated; and excommunication meant the cessation of all the offices of social life, each man being forced by fear for himself to stand aloof from the one condemned. The obligation to confess, in turn, was an evolution from the primitive practice of voluntary public confession of sin before the church. When that went out of fashion, private confession to the priest took its place; and when the public reading of such confessions by the priest gave offence, Leo the Great directed that they should be regarded as secret. What was thus made for criminals an easy means to absolution became at length an obligation for all. In the East, indeed, it seems to have reached that stage in the fifth century, when a scandal caused the rule to be given up, leaving to the Western church its full exploitation. Sacerdotal confession, thus instituted, was one more hint from the book of paganism, sagaciously developed. In the ancient Greek mysteries, priests had unobtrusively traded on the principle that the initiate must be pure, first inviting confession and then putting a scale of prices on ceremonial absolution; but in the pagan world the

system had never gone far. It was left to Roman Christianity to make it coextensive with the Church, and thus to create a species of social and economic power over mankind which no other religion ever attained.

But yet a third hold over fear and faith was wrought by the priesthood. Even as the priestly saying of Masses, bought at a price, was needed to keep the Christian safe in life, so the buying of Masses could hasten the release of his soul from purgatory after death. Purgatory was, to begin with, yet another pagan tenet, which in the first five centuries was regarded by the Church as heretical, though the text about "the spirits in prison" (1 Peter iii. 19; cp. 1 Cor. v. 5) gave colour to it, and Origen had entertained it. In all the writings of Ambrose it is not mentioned; Augustine treats it as dubious in despite of the authority of Origen; and the Eastern church has never accepted the tenet. But in the writings of Gregory the Great it is treated as an established principle, with the economic corollary that he who would save himself or his kindred from prolonged pains in purgatory must lay out money on atoning Masses. Thus the whole cycle of real and supposed human experience was under the church's sway, and at every stage on the course the pilgrim paid toll. The episodes of birth, marriage, and death were alike occasions for sacraments, each a source of clerical revenue: the fruits of the earth paid their annual tithe; and beyond death itself the church sold privilege in the realm of shadows, winning by that traffic, perhaps, most wealth of all.

It was a general corollary from the whole system that the Church had the right to grant "indulgences"

for sin. If the church could release from penalties in purgatory, it might grant pardons at will on earth. Such a doctrine was of course only very gradually evolved. First of all, perhaps again following a Manichæan precedent, the bishops individually began to waive canonical penances in consideration of the donation by offenders of sums of money for religious purposes. The principle is expressly laid down by Gregory I. There was at the outset no thought of selling the permission to commit an offence; the bishop merely used the opportunity of committed offences to enrich his church, very much as the law in so many cases inflicts fines instead of imprisonment. The procedure, too, was local and independent, even as that of abbots and monks who sold the privilege of seeing and kissing holy relics, which they often carried round the country in procession for revenue purposes. Only after such means of income had long been in use did the papacy attempt to monopolise the former, in virtue of its prerogative of "the keys." But step by step it absorbed the power to release from ordinary penances and to grant "plenary" remission from penances; and finally it undertook, what the bishops had never ventured on, to remit the penalties of purgatory in advance. Such enterprise was evoked only by a great occasion—the Crusades.

The earlier papal indulgences were remissions of penance, and were often given on such tolerable grounds as pilgrimages to the Holy Land, and loyal observance of the papal institution of a "Truce of God" on certain days of the week; indeed one of the original motives may even have been that of controlling the mercenary proceedings of bishops. But when once the popes had proffered plenary indulgence

to all crusaders, decency was at an end. It was obvious that the effect was demoralising to the last degree; and still the practice continued. At the beginning of the thirteenth century Pope Innocent III. offered absolution from all sins past and future, dispensation from the payment of interest on debts, and exemption from the jurisdiction of the ordinary law courts, to all who would serve for a given period in the crusade against the Albigensian and other heretics in the territory of the Count of Toulouse. Later, similar inducements were offered to all who would take up arms against the Moors in Spain. If the moral sense of Christendom were not thus wholly destroyed, it is because all social life necessitates some minimum of morality, which no system can uproot.

Thenceforth the practice went from bad to worse, despite many earnest protests from the better and saner sort of churchmen, till it became possible for popes to allot the traffic in indulgences in given districts as kings allotted trading monopolies, and the enormity of the practices of the agents gave a sufficient ground for the decisive explosion of the Reformation. Before that explosion an attempt was made, on the lines of ancient Roman law, to give the practice plausibility by the formula that the indulgence was granted "out of the superfluous merits of Christ and the saints," a treasure of spare sanctity which it lay with the Pope to distribute. But this doctrine, which savoured so much of the counting-house, was contemporaneous with the worst abuse the principle ever underwent after the age of the Crusaders.

§ 3. *Rationalistic Heresies.*

As we have seen in connection with the growth of idolatry, there was even in the Dark Ages an earnest minority within the Church which resisted the downward bias of the majority and of their hierarchical rulers. In no period, probably, was the spirit of reason wholly absent; and from time to time it bore distinct witness. Thus we find alongside of the effort of Claudius and Agobard against idolatry and extraneous superstitions a less vigorous but no less remarkable testimony against the central superstition of the priestly system. When the Frankish monk Paschasius Radbert (831) put flatly what had become the orthodox doctrine of Rome as to the transubstantiation of the eucharist, some of the northern scholars who had preserved the pre-barbaric tradition were found to gainsay him. As the discussion continued long the liberal-minded Frankish emperor, Charles the Bald, invited special replies; and a learned monk, Ratramnus, wrote a treatise to the effect that the "real presence" was spiritual, not corporeal. But John the Scot (then = Irishman), otherwise known as Erigena, wrote on the same invitation to the effect that the bread and wine were merely symbols or memorials of the Last Supper—a heresy so bold that only the emperor's protection could have saved the utterer. And his freethinking did not end there, for in the discussion on predestination begun by the monk Gottschalk, in which John was invited to intervene by the bigoted abbot Hincmar, the Irish scholar was again recalcitrant to authority; while on the question

of Deity and Trinity he held a language that anticipated Spinoza, and brought upon his memory, when he was long dead, the anathema of the papacy. Another Irishman of the same period, Macarius or Macaire, taught a similar pantheism in France.

John Scotus, however, was by far the greatest thinker of the Dark Ages, and it was impossible that his ideas should become normal. Not for two hundred years was there any overt result from his and Ratramnus's heresy on the eucharist. Then (1045) Berengar of Tours set forth a modified doctrine of the eucharist which rested on that of Ratramnus, and brought on him a series of prosecutions at Rome for heresy, from the punishment for which he was saved by Hildebrand, as papal adviser and later as Pope; but also by his own formal retractations, to which however he did not adhere. The populace, he tells us, would gladly have slain him; and more than once he had narrow escapes. After all he did but affirm a "spiritual real presence"; and while some of his party went as far as John Scotus, the stand for reason was soon tacitly abandoned, the great majority even of the educated class accepting the priestly dogma. Not till the Reformation was it again firmly challenged, and even then not by all the reformers.

A similar fortune attended the attempt of the French canon Rousselin (Roscellinus), also in the twelfth century, to rationalise the doctrine of the Trinity. Proceeding logically as a "Nominalist," denying the reality of abstractions, he argued that if the Three Persons were one thing it was only a nominal thing. His heresy, however, admittedly ended in simple tritheism; and after he, like Berengar, had on pressure recanted, his subsequent

withdrawal of his recantation did not revive excitement. Not till the sixteenth century did Unitarianism assert itself against Trinitarianism, and Deism against both. There was indeed a great development of general rationalism in philosophy in the twelfth century, especially in France, as represented by Abailard; and even in the eleventh the argument of Anselm to prove the existence of God shows that very radical scepticism had indirectly made itself heard; but no philosophic movement affected the teachings and practices of the Church as such. As for the kind of rationalism which denied the immortality of the soul, though it seems to have been somewhat common at Florence early in the twelfth century, it never took such propagandist form as to bring on it the assault of the papacy; and the occasional philosophic affirmation of the eternity of matter met the same immunity. It is remarkable that, despite the denunciation of all the truths of ancient science by the church, the doctrine of the roundness of the earth was still affirmed in the eighth century by a priest of Bavaria named Virgilius, who was duly denounced for his heresy by St. Boniface, and excommunicated by the pope. Still the knowledge persisted; and though in the fourteenth century Nicolaus of Autricuria was compelled to recount his teaching of the atomistic theory, in the fifteenth his namesake of Cusa taught with impunity the rotation of the earth on its axis, being despite that made a cardinal; while the Italian poet Pulci with equal impunity affirmed the existence of an Antipodes. Nicolaus of Cusa even put forth the doctrine of the infinity of the physical universe—the beginning of modern pantheistic and atheistic philosophy.

As the Renaissance began to glimmer, a new source of heresy can be seen in the higher teaching—heretical in its own sphere—of Saracen philosophy, which under Aristotelian and Jewish influences had gone far while Christendom was sinking in a deepening darkness. The effects of Saracen contacts, acting on minds perhaps prepared by the doctrine of John Scotus, first became obvious in the pantheistic teaching of Amalrich of Bena and David Dinant at the end of the twelfth century. Amalrich was forced to abjure; and after his death his bones were dug up and burned (1209), and many of his followers burned alive; David of Dinant having to fly for his life. Then it was that a Council held at Paris vetoed all study of Aristotle at the university. Yet in 1237 the veto was withdrawn; and as Aristotle became the basis of the systematic theology of Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274), his philosophy was thenceforth the orthodox system in the schools. From the first it must have counted for indirect scepticism; and in the great *Summa Theologiæ* of Thomas himself are to be seen abundant traces of the new doubt of the age, much of it set up by reflection on the spectacle of conflicting religious dogmatisms in the Crusades, some of it by Saracen philosophy, especially that of Averroës. In Sicily and Southern Italy, which under Frederick II. were the special seat of this doubt and of the tendency to tolerance which it generated, the spirit of reason ultimately fared ill; but thenceforth an element of scepticism pervades the higher life of Europe. Saracen science, medical, chemical, and astronomical —the virtual foundation of all the modern science of Europe—tended in the same direction. In Italy, in particular, respect for the church and papacy almost

ceased to exist among educated men; and the revival of such specific heresies as disbelief in immortality and belief in the eternity of matter prepared the way for simple deism.

But against all such heresy the Church could hold its ground in virtue of its vast vested interests, as well as of the subjection of the mass, superstitious even when irreverent. The practical danger to the Church's power lay first in the growth of anti-clerical feeling among people with religious instincts, and secondarily in the anti-clerical economic interest of the nobility and upper classes in all the northern countries. What delayed disaster was the slowness of the two hostile elements to combine.

§ 4. *Anti-clerical Heresies.*

The kind of heresy which first roused the Church to murderous repression was naturally that which struck at its monopolies. After the ancient schism of the Donatists, which so organised itself as to set up a rival church, the sect which was most bloodily persecuted in the period of established Christianity from Theodosius onwards was the Manichæan, visibly the Church's most serious rival. So, in the dark ages, the heresies which roused most priestly anger were the movement against image-worship; the predestinarian doctrine of Gottschalk, which, though orthodox and Augustinian, was now felt to undermine the priest's power over souls in purgatory; and that which impugned the priestly miracle of the eucharist, the main hold of the priesthood over society. And the first resort to general and systematic massacre as against

heresy in the west was made after there had arisen in the eleventh and twelfth centuries a movement of popular schism which assailed not only a number of leading rites and dogmas, but flatly denied the priestly prerogative.

Of this movement the first stages occurred in the eastern empire, in the sect known as Paulicians, who are first heard of under that name in Armenia in the seventh century. Their founder however, one Constantine, afterwards known as Sylvanus, worked on existing bases. The name of the sect seems to have stood for an appeal to Paul as against paganised Christianity; and it had Marcionite elements; but though it was at first anti-Gnostic and anti-Manichæan, it acquired both Gnostic and Manichæan or at least Mazdean characteristics, even in the teaching of Sylvanus. On the face of the case, it suggests both Persian and Moslem influences. Its practical heresies were opposition to the adoration of images and relics, to the use of the Old Testament, to the worship of saints, angels, and the Virgin; and to the prerogatives of monks and priests, the sectaries claiming to read the New Testament for themselves, in defiance of the virtual veto of the Greek Church on such study by the laity. For the rest, they insisted that baptism and the eucharist were spiritual and not bodily rites, and even reaffirmed the "Docetic" doctrine that Jesus had not a true human body, and so was incapable of suffering. Their flat denial of priestly claims marked them out as a specially obnoxious body, and they were fiercely persecuted, the founder being stoned to death.

Like all the other sects, they were in turn divided, and one section had the protection of Leo the Iconoclast, who agreed with them as to images. A later

leader, Sergius or Tychicus, won for his sect the favour of Nicephorus I.; but the next iconoclast, Leo the Armenian, resenting their other heresies, cruelly persecuted them; and like previous heretical sects they were driven over to the national enemy, which was now Islam. Constantine Copronymus, seeking to remedy this state of things, transplanted many of them to Constantinople and Thrace, thus bringing their heresy into Europe; but in the ninth century, on the final restoration of image-worship, a vast multitude was massacred in Armenia, most of the remnant going over to the Saracens, and becoming the fiercest enemies of the empire.

From Thrace, meanwhile, their propaganda spread into Bulgaria, where it prospered, with the help of refugees from Armenia. In the tenth century they were to some extent favoured as a useful bulwark against the Slavs; but in the eleventh they were again persecuted; and as the malcontents of the empire in general tended to join them they became the ruling party in Bulgaria. Thus it came about that the name Bulgar, Bulgarian, became a specific name in mid-Europe for heretic, surviving to this day in that sense in the French form of *bougre*. The Paulicians, further, had their own extremists, who held by the old Marcionite veto on marriage, and received the Greek name of *cathari*, "the pure"—a title sometimes given to the whole mass, from whom, however, the purists were in that case distinguished as *perfecti*. Either from the *Cathari* or from the Chazari, a Turkish tribe whose Christianity in the ninth century was much mixed with Mohammedanism, came the Italian nickname *gazzari*, and the German word for heretic, *ketzer*. Yet another eastern sect, the

Slavonic Bogomilians, who remained monotheistic as against the dualism of the Paulicians, joined in the wave of new beliefs which began to beat from the east on central Europe.

From the very beginning of the eleventh century, outbreaks of the new heresy, always anti-clerical and anti-ceremonial, occurred at intervals in France, northern Italy, and Germany. In some cases, the opposition to priests, images, and Virgin-worship extended to a denial of all miracles and sacraments, and an assertion of the eternity of matter—apparent signs of Saracen philosophic influence. But the movement developed a thoroughness of enmity to everything ecclesiastical, that told of a quite independent basis in the now widespread hostility to the Church of Rome outside of its centre of wealth and power. For one or two generations the crusades drew off the superfluous energy of Europe, and the new heresies were somewhat overshadowed; but in the first half of the twelfth century, when the crusades had lost all religious savour, anti-clericalism sprang up on all hands. Tanquelin in Flanders; Peter de Brueys (founder of the Petrobrussians) in Languedoc; the monk Henry in Switzerland and France; Eudo of Stello in Brittany, and Arnold of Brescia in Italy, all wrought either religiously or politically against the Church; and all died by her violence, or in prison. Arnold, the most capable of all, was a pupil of Abailard, and his doctrine was that the entire vested wealth of the Church should be taken over by the civil power, leaving the clergy to live sparingly by the gifts of the faithful. His movement, which lasted twenty years, and was very strong in Lombardy, went so far as to set up a short-lived republic in Rome;

but it needed only a combination of the pope and the emperor, Frederick Barbarossa, to bring the republic to the ground, and Arnold to crucifixion.

Among the other revolters there was a good deal of fanaticism; but all were more or less emphatic in denouncing priestly pretensions, sacraments, cross-worship, prayers for the dead, penance, image-worship, church bells, altars, and even churches. It seemed as if the end of the Church had begun. For, though each new prophet in turn was slain, new heretics seemed to rise from the ashes. With various positive tenets, they were at one in their enmity to the priesthood. In Italy there flourished a sect called the Pasagini (apparently = *Passagieri*, Crusaders) or the Circumcised, who returned to the law of Moses and to Ebionite views of Jesus; in France, a different order of zealots, called Caputiati from the habit of carrying an image of the Virgin on their hats, stood for a return to primeval equality and liberty. Between such types of heresy stood the Apostolici, mostly poor working-folk, but with powerful sympathisers, who urged a return to the "apostolic" ideal of poverty and simplicity, and further discouraged marriage, calling themselves "the chaste brethren and sisters." Two of their leaders, Sagarelli and Fra Dolcino, had shown the usual aversion to the Church, Dolcino predicting the formation of native States and the purification of the Papacy; so they, too, were put to death, being burnt at the stake. And still new revolters appeared.

At this stage there came to the front the sectaries known in history as the Vaudois or Waldenses, a name standing properly for the inhabitants of the Vaux or Valleys of Piedmont, but further connected

with the teaching of one Peter Waldus, a Lyons merchant, whose followers received also the name of the Poor Men of Lyons. How far the anti-Catholic tenets of the Waldenses derive from ancient heresy is uncertain; but it is clear that late in the twelfth century they were acted on by the immense ferment of new ideas around them. Like the Paulicians, they insisted that the laity should read the Bible for themselves; and their men and women members went about preaching wherever they could get a hearing, and administering the eucharist without priestly sanction. At the same time they condemned tithes, opposed fasting and prayers for the dead, preached peace and non-resistance, denied the authority of the Pope, and impeached the lives of the clergy.

All of these forces of heresy, and yet others, were specially at work in the rich and prosperous region of Languedoc, the patrimony of Count Raymond of Toulouse. Paulicians and Waldenses, Cathari, Albanensians or sectaries of Albano, Albigensians or sectaries of the town of Alby or the district of Albigensium, Bogomilians, Apostolici, Caputiati, and nondescript *Paterini* (a Milanese name for a popular faction)—all were active in the name of religion; and in addition there were at work heretics of another stamp—the gay, wandering Goliards or satirical poets and minstrels, who loved the priests and the papacy as little as did the zealots; and the graver doubters who had got new views of life from Saracen science and philosophy. As against the whole amorphous mass of misbelief, the Papacy planned and effected a stupendous crusade of slaughter.

From the first the Manichæans, as the church loved to call the heretics indiscriminately, had been bloodily

punished. One bishop of the eleventh century, Wazon of Liege, is to be remembered as having protested against the universal policy of slaughter; and another, Gerhard of Cambrai and Arras, is said to have won over some heretics by persuasion; but these were voices in the wilderness. Fire, sword, halter, and cross were the normal methods of repression; and during the eleventh and twelfth centuries thousands probably so perished. But the campaign which came to be known as the Albigensian crusade was planned by Pope Innocent III. to outdo all the isolated punishments of the past, and it succeeded. Grounds for quarrel with the Count of Toulouse were easily found; and the offer of indulgences, on the lines laid down in the crusades against the Saracens, brought eager volunteers from all parts of Europe, for only forty days' service was now called for. The submission of Count Raymond was not permitted to check the massacre of his subjects. It was in the first campaign that the papal legate Arnold, abbot of Cliteaux, when asked at the storming of Beziers how the heretics were to be distinguished from the true believers, gave the historic answer, "Kill all; God will know." By his own account they killed in that one place fifteen thousand men, women, and children. The chroniclers, who make the slain twice or thrice as many, tell how seven thousand of them were found in the great church of Mary the Magdalene—her from whom, in the legend, had been cast out seven devils without letting of blood.

Begun in 1209, the Albigensian crusades outlasted the life of Innocent III., who grew sick of the slaughter while the priesthood were calling for its extension. They praised in particular the Anglo-French Simon de Montfort, who slew many of his victims by

torture, and tore out the eyes of many more. For nearly twenty years the wars lasted, plunder being a sufficient motive after heresy had been drowned in blood or driven broadcast throughout Europe. It has been reckoned that a full million of all ages and both sexes were slain. Yet as late as 1231 Pope Gregory IX. was burning troops of the heretics at Rome, and causing many more to be burned in France and Germany.

The precocious civilisation of Languedoc and Provence was destroyed, and the region became a stronghold of Catholic fanaticism; but the political diversity of Europe baffled the papal hope of destroying heresy. Thenceforth the anti-clerical animus never died out: in the course of the thirteenth century it reached even England, then the most docile section of the Catholic fold. Generations before Wiclif, there were heretics in the province of Canterbury who denied the authority of the Pope and even of the Fathers, professing to stand solely on the Bible and the principle of "necessary reason." Wiclif stood on a less heterodox plane, impugning chiefly the extreme form of transubstantiation and the practices of the begging friars; and he was proportionately influential. In the fourteenth century, when international crusades of repression had become politically impossible, the critical spirit is seen freshly at work on anti-papal lines in England, Flanders, France, Germany, and Bohemia, as well as in Italy; and again the more energetic began in their earnest ignorance to frame new schemes of life in the light of their sacred books. The lapse of time and the continuance of orthodox culture had made an end of the old Paulician heresy as such; and of the new movements many, like that set up by Saint Francis in the period of the Albigensian

crusades, were meant to be strictly obedient to the Church. Such were the "Brethren of the Common Lot," a body set up in Holland by educated Churchmen after the so-called Beghards (otherwise Beguins or Beguttæ) had there for a time flourished and degenerated. But the Beghards and the "Brethren of the Free Spirit," who spread widely over northern Europe, had not only aimed at a communal life, but developed the old tendency to pantheism, now gaining ground philosophically on the lines of Averroism. Even among the Franciscans the "Spirituals," who resented the falling away of the order from its ideals of poverty, became heretical. Some adopted the new "Eternal Gospel," by Abbot Joachim of Flora in Calabria, in which it was declared that there now began a new dispensation of the Holy Spirit, superseding that of Jesus. Others, called the *Fraticelli*, or Little Brothers, had a "Gospel of the Holy Spirit," composed by John of Parma. In both cases the spirit of revolt against the Church was marked.

Of the heresy of the fourteenth century the high-water mark is seen in English Lollardism, which, without touching on the philosophical problem, proceeded on the basis of the teaching of Wiclif to a kind of religious rationalism which not only repudiated the rule of the Pope but rejected the institutions of religious celibacy, exorcisms, priestly benedictions, confession and absolution, pilgrimages, masses for the dead, and prayers and offerings to images; and even carried the ethical spirit to the point of denouncing war and capital punishment. In that age, such an ethic could not long thrive. Lollardism, encouraged by the self-seeking nobility while it menaced only the wealth of the church, which they hoped to gain, was

trodden down by them in conjunction with the king and the church when it turned against the abuses of feudal government. But its destruction was most effectually wrought through the national demoralisation set up by the new imperialism of Henry V., who, after passing a new statute for the burning of heretics, won the enthusiastic loyalty of his people by his successful invasion of France. In the corruption of that policy of plunder, and in the ensuing pandemonium of the Wars of the Roses, Lollardism disappeared like every other moral ideal. The time for a union of critical and rapacious forces against the hierarchy was not yet; and when it came in the sixteenth century the critical spirit was on the whole less rational than it had been at the beginning of the fifteenth.

CHAPTER III.

THE SOCIAL LIFE AND STRUCTURE.

§ 1. *The Clergy, Regular and Secular.*

In a world so completely under priestly rule, the character of the priest was in general the image of his influence. Whatever good organised Christianity did was in virtue of the personal work of good men in holy orders; and it is comforting to believe that in all countries and in all ages there were some such, after the fashion of the "parson" in Chaucer. To such men, the priestly status might give a special power for righteousness. But seeing that in the average man righteousness is in the ratio of reflection on knowledge, there is no escape from the conclusion that in the middle ages most priests were poor moral forces. For their general ignorance is beyond doubt. The number who in a given district at a given time were unable to read Latin may be a matter for dispute; but it is clear that what they did read was as a rule merely distilled ignorance. And if we turn to the records of ecclesiastical legislation, we find constant evidence, for many centuries, of the laxity of priestly life in all grades.

To say nothing of the perpetual scandal about concubinage—an artificial form of sin, in itself no more decisive against a priest's character than celibacy in its favour—there is in the canons of the councils a

most significant repetition of vetoes on various lines of conduct which stand for a lack of single-mindedness, and of serious interest in moral tasks. Century after century, the bishops are found forbidding the clergy to tell fortunes, to practise magic, to get drunk, to commit perjury, to take usury, to swear, and to haunt taverns, as well as to keep concubines. At the same time many of the bishops themselves had to be perpetually admonished. Under Justinian we hear of two eastern bishops convicted of unnatural vice, and—the law as usual exceeding the crime—punished by mutilation. Throughout the middle ages, as to-day, the normal complaints against bishops are on the score of avarice, luxury, and worldliness; but drunkenness is not unheard of; and whatever might be said in councils as to concubinage, it was certain that bishops took at least as much liberty of life as popes and presbyters. So far as moral example went, then, the social influence of the priesthood was mostly on the wrong side, since its normal concubinage was a perpetual lesson in hypocrisy.

On this side, doubtless, the priests were no worse than other men; the trouble was that they set up to be better, and that the hierarchy was always seeking to keep up the repute of clerical sanctity by a claim to asceticism rather than by social beneficence. Thus they put it in the power of the "average sensual man" to convict of moral imposture a priesthood which, if free to marry, would have been much less vulnerable; and by constantly stressing self-denial on a wrong line they missed promoting self-control on right lines. The primary social needs of the middle ages were peace, civism, and cleanliness; and for none of these things did clerical teaching in

general avail. On the contrary, it was in effect hostile to all three, since it made virtue consist in a right relation to the other world rather than to this, made religion a special ground for warfare, and made uncleanliness a meritorious form of "self-mortification," which in the middle ages was the last thing that could be truly said of it.

It is not to be forgotten, indeed, that among the monks or other clerical scholars of the Dark Ages was to be found most of what learning and philosophy survived. The reason was that men and youths with the studious instinct, averse to the brawling life around them, turned to the monasteries and monastic schools as their one refuge. But sloth and impotence equally turned thither; and when the stronger spirits could find a peaceful and useful life without, the sluggards stayed. Monasteries were thus always half filled with men to whom their vows were irksome; and as women were at the same time frequently sent to convents against their will, nothing but an iron discipline could keep the professed order. Given an easy abbot or abbess, they became centres of scandal; and in the average they were homes of fairly well-fed idleness. But the full fatality of the case is seen only when we realise that their very successes, their provision of a dim retreat for many men and women of refined and unworldly type, worsened society by leaving the reproduction of the race to the grosser and harder natures.

The ostensible merit of monasteries, in the medieval period, was their almsgiving. Without endorsing the mercantilist impeachment of all such action, we are forced to recognise that theirs demoralised as many as it relieved. Of a higher order than mere almsgiving,

certainly, was the earlier self-sacrificing service of the mendicant orders of friars, whose rise is one of the great moral phenomena of the middle ages. For a time, in the thirteenth century, the order of St. Francis in particular not only organised but greatly stimulated human devotion of the kind that, happily, is always quietly present somewhere; and the contrast between the humble beneficence of the earlier friars and the sleek self-seeking of the average secular priest at once accredited the former and discredited the latter. But the history of the mendicant friars as of the previous orders is a crowning proof of the impossibility of bettering society on a mere religious impulse, without social science.

Credit for holiness brought large gifts and legacies from well-meaning but ill-judging laymen and women; and nothing could prevent the enrichment of orders which had begun under special vows of poverty. Francis had expressly ruled that his friars should not on any pretext hold property, and should not even be able to profit by it through trustees; but the latter provision was annulled, and ere long the order was as well provided for as any. The better the financial footing, the more self-seekers entered; and these overruled the more single-minded. This was the law of development of every "self-denying" order of the Dark and Middle ages, from the Benedictine monks to the Knights Templars. One of the most rigorously planned monasteries of the Middle Ages, that of the lonely Chartreuse, founded by St. Bruno late in the eleventh century, at length relaxed its austerities, and is to-day known as a wholesale manufactory of a liqueur—the distinction by which most men now know also the name of the

Benedictines. In the end, the orders of monks and friars did something for scholarship and education, after the institution of "lay brothers," who did the menial work, left the *domini* in certain orders, especially the Benedictine, free to devote themselves to learning; but socially they achieved nothing. When once they had acquired "foundations" they became plunderers instead of helpers of the poor, exacting from them gifts, selling them *post-mortem* privileges, taking the widow's mite and the orphan's blanket for verbal blessings.

It is always to be remembered, here as before, that Christianity is not the efficient cause of the failures or the evils which happen under its auspices: we are not to suppose that had Osirianism or Judaism or Manichæism or Mithraism chanced to be the religion of Europe these failures and evils would have been averted. What we are to realise is, on the other hand, that the conventional view as to Christianity having been an abnormally efficient cause for good is a delusion. It is not Christianity that has civilised Europe, but Europe—the complex of political and culture forces—that has civilised Christianity. Byzantium and Abyssinia show what the religious system could amount to of itself. Western Europe surpassed these States in virtue of conditions more propitious to energy and to freedom: that was the difference. At the best, medieval Europe was a world of chronic strife, daily injustice, normal cruelty, abundant misery, and ever-present disease. To show that Christianity, that is, the holding of the Christian creed by the men of that world, made these evils less than they would have been in the same place under any other creed, is impossible. On the other hand, it

is clear that the influence of Christian doctrine and tradition was on some sides conservative of evil and obstructive of good.

Those tendencies may indeed be regarded as operating in the intellectual life, which, though it is in reality only a side of the sociological whole, we shall conveniently consider apart. Under that head too we shall note the influence of the Church for culture on the side of art. But on the side of ordinary life the influence of the clergy as teachers had two specific tendencies which may here be noted. One was the disparagement of women; the other the encouragement of cruelty.

On the first head, as on so many others, the conventional view is a fallacy. That Christianity raised the status of women is still a general assumption; but exact research, even when made by an orthodox theologian, proves the contrary. Down to the nineteenth century, the solidest rights women possessed were those secured to them by ancient Roman law; and the tendency of Christian legislation was certainly to restrict rather than to expand such rights. At the same time the so-called "Manichæan" element in gospel Christianity, the tendency to regard the sexual instinct as something corrupt and unclean, gave to the ordinary language of the Fathers concerning women a tone of detraction and aversion. The one remedy for an overpoise of the sexual element in life, and for over-emphasis of female function on that side, is to secure the community of the sexes in the intellectual life; and organised Christianity, instead of inculcating this, minimised the intellectual life all round, thus making self-restraint a matter of morbid asceticism as against the excess inevitably following

on disuse of mind. In particular, a priesthood nominally committed to celibacy, yet always practising in the confessional a morbid inquisition into sexual matters, was committed to treating women disparagingly as forces of "temptation" when it was not yielding thereto. Nothing could be more injurious to women's real credit. It is true that the worship of the Virgin would in some measure counteract the discredit; but this held equally true of the worship of many pagan Goddesses; and there is nothing to show that the status of women was higher in medieval Christendom than in ancient Egypt. Among the Teutons, the moral status of women seems to have been greatly lowered by the introduction of Christianity.

As regards cruelty, the evidence is only too abundant. Mosheim admits that in the Crusades the Christians were more ferocious than the Saracens. In the old burg of Nuremberg there is preserved a collection (sometimes exhibited elsewhere) of the instruments of torture in common use down to the age of the Reformation. It is an arsenal of horror. Such engines of atrocity were the normal punitive expedients of a world in which the image of the Saviour on the cross was supposed to move men to compassion and contrition; and in which that Saviour's death was held to redeem men from the penalties of their sins. Here the practical teaching and example of the priesthood was all for cruelty. They presided or assisted when the heretic was racked or burned alive; and their whole conception of morals made for such methods. Holding the madman as possessed by a devil, they taught that he should be cruelly scourged: holding that the leper was stricken by God for sin,

they taught that he should be shunned the more. Paganism was saner.

Nothing is more true in social psychology than the hard saying of Feuerbach, that "only where reason rules, does universal love rule: reason is itself nothing else than universal love. It was faith, not love, not reason, that invented Hell." "*Faith has within it a malignant principle.*" Medieval Christendom is the demonstration. In that age the spirit of reason was but occasionally glimpsed. It is seen in the teaching of John Scotus, who, besides his concrete heresy on the eucharist, held the all-embracing heresy that authority is derivable solely from reason, and from his pantheism deduced the conviction that the doctrine of hell is but an allegory, the actuality of which would be the negation of divine goodness. But such teaching belonged rather to pagan philosophy than to Christian faith, and was anathematised accordingly. It never reached even the scholarly class in general; and specifically Christian teaching which aimed at softening the heart was spread abroad to little purpose.

§ 2. *The Higher Theology and its Effects.*

There is something saddening, though not really strange, in the failure even of the most attractive elements in medieval Christianity to better the world. To read of the life and teaching of St. Francis of Assisi is to come as it were in the presence of a really elemental force of goodness. His namesake of Sales was a persecutor; but the founder of the Franciscan order seems free of that taint. In him the ecstasy of pietism seems purified of that correlative of fanatic

malignity which so constantly dogs it in the literature of ancient Christianity, from the epistles of Paul to the treatises of Augustine. We hear of his love for all animals, his seldom-failing goodwill to men, and his sweet contentment in humble contemplation. Yet when we study him in relation to his age there fronts us the startling fact that while his active career is almost exactly synchronous with the horrible Albigensian crusades, there is no trace in the records that he was even saddened by them. They ought to have darkened for him the light of the sun; but not once does he seem to have given even a deprecating testimony against them. In him, the flower of medieval Christianity, loyalty to the faith seems to have annulled some of the most vital modes of moral consciousness.

So again with the influence of such a religious classic as the *Imitatio Christi*, attributed to Thomas à Kempis, but probably the work of several hands, in different countries and centuries. Many men and women must have supposed themselves to live by it; and its influence seems wholly for peace and self-surrender. Yet it would be hard to show that it ever restrained any corporate tendency of a contrary kind, or ruled the corporate life of a single religious sect. The truth is that its message was for a life of isolation, as that of the ideal monk in his cell. Seclusion and not social life, mystic contemplation and not wise activity, duty to God and not duty to man, are its ideals. It was in a manner the Christian counterpart of the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius or the Enchiridion of Epictetus—a manual of the higher or inner life, making Christianity do for medieval men what Stoicism could do for pagans in the decadent Roman

empire. But Stoicism, by Christian consent, made for good government; and there is no trace of any such result from the *Imitatio*. The model Christian monarch, St. Louis of France, lived in an earlier age; and even he was a fanatic where heresy was concerned, and a promoter of religious wars.

The same fatality appears, again, when we turn to the mystical theology of the German fourteenth-century school of Tauler and Eckhart, in which both Luther and some of our own day see a high inspiration. Here, perhaps, we come on the secret of the failure we are considering. Eckhart was a scholar, who had studied and taught at Paris, and ranked as "provincial" of the Dominican order for Saxony; and Tauler was his pupil before settling at Basle. Both men undoubtedly influenced the Brethren of the Free Spirit and others of the so-called Beghards and Beguins, before mentioned, in particular the sect who called themselves the "Friends of God"; and they may so be said to have affected society practically, since these movements aimed at a species of communism. But the essence of their theology was alien to that or any organised movement, and if lived up to would have dissolved it without the interference of the priests and others who under authority drove women of the Beguine movement from their homes and seized their poor goods. "If thou wouldst have the Creator," says Tauler, "thou must forego the creature. The less of the creature, the more of God. Therefore abjure all creatures, with all their consolations." Not thus were men in general to be taught to live more brotherlike. The rude world of the Middle Ages went on its way, unaffected in the main either by mysticism or by the movements which

set up self-centred societies within society. It needed a more human spirit to affect humanity in mass.

Such a human spirit, indeed, may be held to have shown itself in the movement set up in Florence by Girolamo Savonarola near the end of the fifteenth century. Savonarola was moved by a high concern for individual conduct; and his gospel was substantially that of an Ebionite Christian, wroth with all luxury as well as with all levity of life. Thus he wielded a great influence, setting up in the splendid Florence of the later Renaissance a forecast of the iron-bound Geneva of Calvin. It is no final impeachment of him to say that, having gone so far, he failed and fell; but it is clear that he could not have been a durable civilising force. His influence was that of a fanatic, operating by contagion of excitement and superstitious fear, not that of an enlightener or a statesmanlike guide. To him amenity and luxury, art and vice, selfishness and scepticism, were alike anathema; and he set up in Florence a kind of pietistic reign of terror, driving impressionable believers to give up their pictures to the fire for peace' sake, and even letting others be forced to it by fear. On the great political need of the Italian cities, a fraternal federation, he had no light whatever; and we find him encouraging his fellow citizens in their fatal passion for dominating Pisa instead of making of her an ally and a friend. Lacking light, he finally lacked force; and when he fell, he fell utterly, leaving no enduring ideal or discipline to his countrymen.

Thus on every side and at every point in the history of the ages of faith the ostensibly best religious influences are found failing to heal society, failing to

check the forces of oppression and dissolution and strife. If we would trace the forces which really affected social structure and raised masses of men some way in the scale of manhood, we must turn to the clash of interests and classes, the play of secular knowledge, the undertakings of laymen on normal lines of aspiration and on secular views of right.

§ 3. *Christianity and Feudalism.*

We have seen, in studying the expansion of the Church, how it grew by lending itself to the interests of kings and chiefs as against subjects. On the same grounds, it made for empires as against self-governing States. But inasmuch as the papacy ere long fell out with the emperors of the new line it had itself consecrated, it also contributed to the break-up of feudalism, in the widest sense of the term; and it is possible to claim for the church, further, a restraining influence on the oppressive action of feudalism, early and late, in various directions. Under this head would fall to be judged, in particular, its action on slavery.

As the institution of slavery was taken over by the Christian emperors from the pagan without any hint of disapproval, it is clear, to begin with, that the Church had in its days of struggle made no sign of such condemnation. Nor was there anything in its sacred books to suggest a repudiation of slavery: on the contrary, Jesus is made to accept it as a matter of course (Luke xvii. 7–10. Gr.); and Paul, in a passage which has been garbled in the English translation, expressly urges that a Christian slave should remain

so even if he have a chance to become free (1 Cor. vii. 20, 21). He and some of the Fathers certainly urge that slaves should be kindly treated; but many pagans had done as much, and Seneca on that theme had outgone them all. Laws for the protection of slaves, too, had been enacted by many emperors long before Constantine. The only ground, then, on which Christianity could be credited with setting up on religious grounds an aversion to slavery would be a visible increase in manumissions after the time of Constantine. No such increase, however, took place.

A misconception on the subject has arisen by way of a hasty inference from the fact that in the Christian period all manumissions were religious acts, performed through the Church. This was no result of any Christian doctrine, being in fact a deliberate imitation of pagan practice. Before Constantine, as we have seen, the act of manumission was a religious one, performed as such in the pagan temples; and when Constantine adroitly transferred the function from those temples to the churches, he probably put a check on the process of liberation, since pagans would long be reluctant to go to the churches for any purpose. For centuries manumission had been a common act, the number of freedmen in Rome being notoriously great at all times, from the day of Cicero onwards. It was almost a matter of course for a Roman master to free a multitude of his slaves on his death-bed or by his will, till Augustus enacted that no one should emancipate more than a hundred at once. A diligent slave, in fact, could usually count on getting his freedom by five or six years of service; and many were allowed to buy it out of

their savings, or out of earnings they were permitted to make.

So far were the earlier Christian emperors, with one exception, from seeking to raise the status of slaves, that they re-enacted the rule excluding them from the purview of the law against adultery, "because of the vileness of their condition." The exception was a law of Constantine forbidding the separation of slaves from their families—a humane veto disregarded by Christian slaveowners in recent times. But Constantine on the other hand enacted that if a freewoman should cohabit with a slave, she should be executed, and he burned alive; and the laws against fugitive slaves were made more cruel. Gratian even enacted that any slave who dared to accuse his master of any crime, unless it were high treason, should be burned alive, without any inquiry into the charge. For the rest, the Fathers justified slavery on the score of the curse passed on Ham; and the theses of the Stoics as to the natural equality of men had from them no countenance.

Only in the reign of Justinian did the law begin expressly to encourage manumission, to recognise freedmen as full citizens, and to raise the slave status; and several circumstances are to be noted as giving a lead to such a course. Justinian had pursued a policy of great outlays where his immediate predecessors had been frugal, and to sustain it he had to impose much fresh taxation on the land. For fiscal purposes, it had long been recognised, the government did well to limit the power of proprietors to dispose of their slaves; and it is probable that the humane law of Constantine really had this end in view. By raising slaves to the status of half-free

peasants, the State increased the number of its taxpayers. "The labourer of the soil then became an object of great interest to the treasury, and obtained almost as important a position in the eyes of the fisc as the landed proprietor himself." In the process the small freeman was put in a worse position than before; but the slave was at the same time bettered—the hereditary slave, that is, for captives were enslaved or bought throughout the history of the Byzantine empire.

The legal change was thus made from economic motives; but one moral gain did indirectly accrue from the existence of the Church as such. Under Justinian the empire was re-expanded after having been for a time curtailed; and this would under paganism have meant a large addition to the number of slaves. The recovered lands, however, were peopled by Christians; and all bishops were bound in their own interest to resist the enslavement and deportation of their flocks; so that Christianity at this point was favourable to freedom exactly as was Islam, which forbade Moslems to enslave Moslems. And the indirect benefit did not end there. The Church, like the fisc, had a good deal to gain pecuniarily from the freeing of slaves; and, especially in the west, though it supported slave-laws, it encouraged masters to manumit for the sake of their souls' welfare in the next world. That the motive here again was political and not doctrinal is clear from the two facts—(1) that even when making serfs priests for its own service the Church often did not legally free them, thus keeping them more fully subject to discipline; and (2) that while urging laymen to free the slaves or serfs on their lands churchmen were the last to free those on

their own, on the score that no individuals in orders had the right to alienate the property of the order as such. Other economic causes, of course, effectually concurred to further the freeing of slaves and serfs, else the institution would not have decayed as it did in the Middle Ages. It is noteworthy, too, that while the Jews were the great slave dealers for Europe in the Dark Ages, thus dangerously deepening their own unpopularity and moving the Church to thwart the traffic on Christian grounds, Christians everywhere were long eager to buy and sell barbarians such as the Slavs (from whose name came the very term "slave" in the modern languages); while the Christian Anglo-Saxons and Anglo-Normans for centuries maintained a trade in kidnapped Anglo-Saxon or British children and young women, selling them to Ireland after they were no longer saleable on the continent. A similar traffic went on among the Bohemians, before the eyes of St. Adalbert. What the Church did, broadly speaking, was to restrain the enslavement of Christians by their fellows; and to raise funds to redeem Christian captives from the Saracens. To a certain extent the motive was religious: otherwise it was self-regarding.

In similarly indirect ways, organised Christianity tended at times to restrain feudal tyranny. The bishop and the abbot were territorial magnates, who to some extent counterpoised the baron; and though the bishops were too often only barons with a difference, they were often a barrier to lay ambition and violence. Even as the king's rule might protect the common people as against their local lords—though the feudal system did not originally suppose this—so the Church might be a local benefactor in virtue of its

local interests. Here again, however, the influence was not doctrinal; and churchmen in general endorsed the feudal law in letter and in spirit, always availing themselves of its machinery to extort their own dues.

On the other hand, insofar as the papacy in the twelfth century began to throw its weight on the side of the popular party in Italy as against the aristocratic and imperial party, thus constituting the Guelph faction as against the Ghibeline, it indirectly furthered the cause of self-government; and even in its official doctrine there thus came to be inserted provisions in favour of the claim of subjects to choose their rulers. The teaching of Thomas Aquinas to this effect must have counted for something in the later evolution of political doctrine. Nothing however is more remarkable than the ease with which dutiful kings, as those of later Spain and France, secured the assent of the Church, as the early barbarian kings had done, to the suppression of all popular liberties. The economic or administrative interest of the Church was always the determinant of its action. It supplied no fixed principle conducive to peace; on the contrary, it was always a force the more for war in Europe.

§ 4. *Influence of the Crusades.*

That some social gains may be correlative with great historic evils is perhaps best seen in the case of the Crusades organised by the Church against the Saracens in Palestine. These campaigns were first conceived in the interests of the papal power; and as early as 999 Pope Sylvester II. (Gerbert), who had been anti-papal before his elevation, sent a letter

through Europe appealing for united action on behalf of the Church of Jerusalem. There was no response. In 1074 Gregory VII. strove hard to the same end, seeing in a conquest of the Turks a means to extend his power over the Eastern Church. Not, however, till Europe was full of tales of the cruelties wrought by the new Eastern power, the Turks, against Christian pilgrims—a marked change from the comparative tolerance of the Caliphs—was it possible to begin a vast crusading movement among all classes, aiming at the recovery of the empty sepulchre from which the Christ had risen. To this movement Pope Urban II. zealously lent himself, backing up the wild appeal of Peter the Hermit (1094) with the fatal bribe of indulgences.

The first effect (1096) was to collect several immense and almost formless mobs of men and women who by all accounts were in the main the refuse of Europe. "That the vast majority looked upon their vow as a licence for the commission of any sin, there can be no moral doubt." The devout exaltation of the few was submerged by the riot of the many, who began using their indulgences when they began their march, and rolled like a flood across Europe, massacring, torturing, and plundering Jews wherever they found them, and forcibly helping themselves to food where plunder was easy. Multitudes perished by the way; multitudes more were sold as slaves in Byzantium to pay for the feeding of the rest there; and of the seven thousand who reached Asiatic soil with Peter the Hermit, four thousand were slain by the Turks at Nicæa; some 300,000 thus perishing in all. Inasmuch as Europe was thus rid of a mass of its worst inhabitants, the first crusade might be said so far to have

wrought indirect good; but the claim is hardly one to be pushed on religious grounds.

The more organised military forces who soon followed under Godfrey of Bouillon and other leaders, though morally not better witnesses to Christianity, achieved at length (1099) the capture of Jerusalem, and founded the Latin kingdom of Palestine, which subsisted in force for less than a hundred years, and in a nominal form for a century longer. As a display of Christian against "pagan" life and conduct, the process of conquest was worse than anything seen in the east in the Christian era. No armies were ever more licentious than those of "the cross"; and those of Attila were hardly more ferocious. Their own lives were lost in myriads, by the sword, by disease, and by debauchery; they were divided by mutual hatreds from first to last; and the one force to unify them was the hatred against the infidel which wreaked itself in the massacre of men, women, and children after the capture of a city. Besieging Antioch, they shot heads of hundreds of slain Turks into the city from their engines, and dug up hundreds of corpses to put the heads on pikes. It is even recorded that when their savage improvidence left them starving at the siege of Marra they fed on the corpses they dug up; and when the place was stormed Bohemond gave up to the general massacre even those inhabitants who had paid him large sums for their lives, sparing only the young, whom he sent to the slave-markets of Antioch. When Godfrey took Jerusalem, the Jews there were all burned alive in their synagogues; and the chronicles tell that the crusaders rode their horses to the temple knee-deep in the blood of many thousands of slain misbelievers. On the second day, in

cold blood, there was wrought a fresh massacre by way of solemn sacrifice; and in the name of Jesus were slain a great multitude of every age—mothers with the infants in their arms, little children, youths and maidens, and men and women bowed with age. Thus was retrieved the mythic Saviour's Sepulchre.

Eight times, during two hundred years, was the effort repeated, as the fortunes of the Christian principalities in the East were shaken or overthrown by successive Moslem assailants, and as the papacy saw its chance or need to weaken the emperor, or otherwise avert danger to itself, by renewing the call to arms. No religious teacher seems ever to have doubted the fitness of the undertaking: St. Bernard preached the second Crusade as zealously as Peter did the first; eloquent monks were found, as they were needed, to rouse enthusiasm for each of the rest in turn; and King Louis IX. of France, the model monarch of Christendom, saw in his vain expedition to recover Jerusalem (1248) the highest service he could do to God or man. As each successive crusade failed in the act or was followed by decadence and defeat, the church professed to see in the disaster a penalty for Christian sin; and under Innocent III. the very cardinals of Rome vowed to mend their ways, by way of reviving the warlike zeal of the laity. Among other fruits of the crusading movement had been a vast increase in the papal revenues; and whereas the imposts specially laid on for crusading purposes were said by many to have been appropriated by the papal court, the Pope undertook to put the administration of all such revenue under non-clerical trustees. But between the hardness of the military task and the endless strifes

and degeneracies of the leaders on the one hand, and the growing distrust of the Church on the other, the crusading spirit died out in the thirteenth century.

To all who could sanely judge, it had become clear that the crusades were at once a vast drain on the blood and treasure of Europe and a vast force of demoralisation. In the course of the fifth, the government of Venice succeeded in using the crusaders, in despite of the protests of Innocent III., to wrest the city of Zara from the king of Hungary, himself a zealous crusader. Then the expedition, with the pope's approval, proceeded to interfere in Byzantine strifes, making and unmaking emperors, until they had created chaos, whereupon they sacked Constantinople (1204) with every circumstance of vileness and violence. The Pope, who had hoped to reconcile the Byzantines to papal rule, burst out in bitter indignation at the deeds of the men to whom he had given his indulgences; but morality was at an end all round, as might have been foretold; and the Pope accepted the conquest for what it was to bring him in new power. Christendom thenceforth crusaded with its tongue in its cheek. From the first the papacy had taught that no faith need be kept with unbelievers; and so was given a very superfluous apprenticeship to bad faith between Christians. When in 1212 there broke out the hapless Children's Crusades, out of the 30,000 who followed the boy Stephen some way through France, 5,000 were shipped at Marseilles by merchants who, professing to carry them "for the cause of God, and without charge," sold them as slaves at Algiers and Alexandria. The last recruits furnished by Pope Nicholas IV. to the Grand Master of the Templars were drawn from the jails of Italy: the papacy itself

had ceased to put any heart in the struggle. It is a reasonable calculation that in the two centuries from the first crusade to the fall of Acre (1291) there had perished, in the attempts to recover and hold the Holy Land, nine millions of human beings, at least half of them Christians. Misery and chronic pestilence had slain most; but the mere carnage had been stupendous.

Much has been written as to the gains to civilisation from the "intercourse" thus set up between West and East. Gains there were; and if we remember that thus to have gained was the measure of the incapacity of Christendom for peaceful traffic with the world of Islam, we can learn from the process something of real sociological causation. Men who, from ferocity and fanaticism, could not make quiet acquaintance with their neighbours, were hurled against them in furious hordes, generation after generation, and in the intervals of fighting came to know something of their arts and their thought, exchanging handicrafts and products. The crowning irony of the evolution lay in the entrance of unbelief into the Christian world through the very contact with the "infidel" who was to have been crushed. This perhaps was the discovery that disillusioned the papacy. And but for the spirit of faith and hate—the true correlatives in Christian history—every gain from the Crusades might have been made ten times over in commerce. To make such gains at the price of nine million lives and unutterable demoralisation is the contribution of the Crusades to civilisation.

It is true that from the East the later crusaders learned what chivalry they evolved; that Saladin became a kind of model hero for Christian knights;

and that he could hold knightly friendship with Richard of England. But Richard nevertheless could massacre two thousand hostages in cold blood for an unpaid debt; and his crusading left him as it found him, a faithless ruffian, whom to honour is to be cheated by a romance. Nor did passages of chivalry ever root out of crusaders' hearts the creed that no faith need be kept with a misbeliever.

It is true again that the Crusades involved much social metabolism in Europe. The papal indulgence freed serfs from their masters, and debtors from their usurers, while the crusade lasted: the crusading barons freed many more serfs for a price down, and sold broad lands to middle-class buyers in order to furnish themselves for the campaign. And the mere stir of the exodus and the return, repeated for so many generations, was a vivifying shock to the torpor of medieval Europe, where war was for many the one relief to a vast tedium. But the torpor must go to the credit of the creed if the shock does, since the faith had vetoed the intercourse of peace: and to the same account must be put the throwing back upon itself of the Saracen civilisation, of which Christian enmity directly or indirectly wrought the arrest and ruin, first in the East, later in Spain. Such wreckages surely block the path of the wrecker. If, finally, we seek to measure the reactions of crusading savagery on the life of those who wrought and those who applauded it—a reaction seldom reckoned in the discussion of the "results"—we shall be well prepared for the discovery that in the fourteenth century the general lot of men in Europe showed no betterment; that the tillers of the soil had still to sweat blood under feudal masters, save where the enormous loss

of life through the pestilence known as the Black Death had for a time raised the price of labour; and that the institution which above all embodied for Europe the memory of the Crusades, the Order of the Knights Templars, was at length crushed in its home by as base a conspiracy and as cruel a slaughter as ever marked the struggle of Christian with Mohammedan. It was pretended by Philip the Fair of France, who began the plot, that the Order was anti-Christian, and devoted to blasphemous rites; but there is no proof of the occurrence of anything more than irregular acts of irreverence, answering to the artistic ribaldries of the mason-companies who built the cathedrals. That phenomenon is in itself noteworthy, as showing how the Crusades had tended to shake faith; but the Templars as a whole were no more unbelievers than the kings who coveted their wealth. It was for that wealth, which was indeed incongruously great, that they were conspired against by their fellow Christians, who in two hundred years of a precarious union of enmity against men of another faith had not learned goodwill towards those of their own. The drama ended as it began, in hatred and crime.

CHAPTER IV.

THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE.

§ 1. *Superstition and Intolerance.*

In judging of the intellectual life of the Middle Ages, account must always be taken of the fact that their earlier literature is mainly religious and ecclesiastical, and that such literature often gives a very faint idea of the higher mental life of the educated laity. In our own time, and still more in the last two centuries, the literature of devotion and of the church seldom suggests the play of intelligence that actually goes on in the world: taken by itself, indeed, it would often imply intellectual decline. As we have seen and shall see, the Middle Ages had an intellectual life apart from the Church; and in the period we term the Renaissance that life was far-reaching: there is reason therefore to question whether at a time when authors were mostly clerics there was not some sane thinking of which we read little or nothing. But even if such allowance be made, the fact remains that the period of clerical supremacy in literature is a period of enormous superstition.

Under that term even religious people now include a habitual belief in diabolical agency, a constant affirmation of miracles, portents, divine and fiendish apparitions; and the Protestant adds to the definition saint-worship, belief in the supernatural virtue of

relics, and the acceptance of the daily miracle of transubstantiation. But even if questions of doctrine be put aside, we may sum up that the average Christian in the Middle Ages was more credulous as to daily prodigies, saintly and fiendish, than even the average Catholic peasant of to-day in the more backward European countries. Doubters and unbelievers there must always have been; but in the medieval period it was dangerous to utter doubt, unless by way of attack on priests and monks in circles where they were not popular. Ribald doubt, besides, came off best: grave disbelief incurred suspicion; and where men cannot speak their thought they are hindered in their thinking. The most unseemly debates, such as that as to whether the eucharist when eaten passed through the normal process of digestion ("stercoranism" was the name given to the heresy that it did), and that set up by Ratramnûs as to how the impregnation of the Virgin actually took place—such discussions could go on freely; but more decent controversy could not. Beyond question, the influence of clerical literature was mainly for gross credulity. The lives of the saints in general, from Gregory I. onwards, tell constantly of a puerility of judgment which to an ancient Greek would have been inconceivable, and which was incompatible not only with rational thought but with tolerable veracity. Language and the art of writing had become means of destroying common sense. In the hands of the hagiographers, the use of miracle so far outgoes the older tradition that it must have finally failed to suggest anything divine—even to a believer. To a sceptic it suggests burlesque.

On the other hand, medieval life was in the main

as much ridden by fear of evil spirits as that of any savages of our own time; for every people had kept the notion of their hostile sprites, and the Christian devil was simply made the God of that kingdom. Life, too, was shorter than moderns can well realise; so high was the normal death-rate, so frequent was pestilence, so little understood was disease; and the nearness of death made men either reckless or afraid. Where ignorance and fear go hand in hand, is the realm of superstition. Average religion was summed up in a perfectly superstitious use of the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist; a devout hope in the intercession and protection of the saints; an ever-present fear of the activity of the fiend; a singularly mechanical use of formularies; an intense anxiety to possess or benefit by holy relics, the easy manufacture of which must have enriched myriads; a chronic fear of sorcery; and a conception of hell and purgatory so literal that its general failure to amend or control conduct is a revelation of the inconsequence of average morality. It is often hard to distinguish in medieval religion between devotional and criminal motives. In the life of the Italian St. Romuald (10th c.), it is told that when he insisted on leaving the retreat in Catalonia where he had won a saintly repute, the Catalans proposed to kill him in order to possess his relics. He in turn cudgelled his father nearly to death to make him adhere to his profession of the religious life. Such ethical ideas expressed themselves in the monastic caste not only in austerities but in systematic self-flagellation; and in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries the principle evolved the chronic movements of the Flagellants specially so-called, whose wild and public self-tortures

neither Church nor State could put down while the mania lasted.

In such a world, primed by a great caste of priests, intolerance had its ideal habitat. Aversion to innovating thought is as natural to man as egoism; and an innovating religion is no sooner established than it finds equilibrium in denouncing innovation. Thus, even apart from clerical action, and apart too from the ethnic animosity to Mohammedanism, the medieval laity, knowing nothing of the long intellectual and sectarian struggles which have forced tolerance on modern polity, were spontaneous persecutors of heresy save where it appealed primarily to their anti-clerical economic interests, or carried them away by mere contagion of physical excitement. The Flagellants, for instance, seem positively to have hypnotised many by their procedure, as did the partly kindred and partly contrary sect of Dancers, who flourished in Flanders and Germany late in the fourteenth century. It is thus credible that some were cured by incantations, which were hypnotic with a difference. But all such eccentrics were normally liable to cruel ill-treatment from their conforming fellows; and it is clear that in the fourteenth century the mystical and communistic heresies of Beghards and Beguins, male and female, were promptly persecuted by the general laity. The religion which categorically taught men to love their enemies, never seems to have prepared them to endure in their neighbours a difference of doctrine. It is probable, too, that during the Dark Ages thousands of helpless souls were put to death as sorcerers by mobs without process of law, apart from those executed under the old laws against magic or divination, and the Teutonic codes of the same order. In a

similar spirit, Christian mobs in all countries and ages had chronically wreaked a half-religious, half-economic hatred on the Jews, of whom enormous numbers died by massacre. Here the motive was not wholly religious, since their unfortunate specialisation in usury had set up ill-will against the Jews in the period of the pagan empire, and even among the Moors, who had given them religious toleration; but Christian animus certainly counted for much, and carried the passion to lengths rarely reached in antiquity. Thus the common run of Christian life was grossly intolerant. It was left to the Church as such, however, to frame for the suppression of free thought in religion a machinery never paralleled in human history.

§ 2. *The Inquisition.*

Though all the heresy hunts of the ancient church had implied an inquisitorial ideal, nothing in the nature of a "Holy Office" had existed in the Church till the second quarter of the thirteenth century. It was felt that the faithful could as a rule be trusted to raise the cry of heresy wherever it could be scented. Such prompt action we have seen taken in the cases of Jovinian, Pelagius, Gottschalk, and Berengar. But in the twelfth century the spirit of militant orthodoxy, as seen in zealots like St. Bernard, had reached a strength which pointed to some systematic action on the part of the now much aggrandised papacy. St. Bernard's attitude to Abailard is that of the true Inquisitor: he suspects, to begin with, the accursed spirit of independent thought, and he is straightway determined to make an example of the upstart who

dares to reason on all doctrines for himself. But even St. Bernard, eager as he was for the blood of Moslems, could hardly have anticipated the spirit in which the papacy acted from the Albigensian crusade onwards. Coincident with that crusade was the digging up of Amalrich's bones, the burning of his followers, and the veto on the study of Aristotle at Paris. Intolerance had entered on a new era.

The first steps towards a systematic and centralised Inquisition were taken about 1178, when, under Pope Alexander III., the Church began moving against the "Manichean" heretics of Languedoc. A papal legate at that time forced from the Count of Toulouse and his nobles a promise on oath to resist heresy; and in a council of the following year orthodox princes in general were invited to use force for the purpose. The Pope proceeded not only to excommunicate the heretics and their backers but to declare, in the already consecrated by the Crusades, that no one need keep with them; further offering indulgences for two years all who should make war on them, and calling on their lords to reduce them to slavery. As a result, a crusade was made in 1181, so little marked by bloodshed as to be insignificant in comparison with those of the next generation, but sufficient to force an abjuration of heresy from the lords concerned. Thereafter, in 1184, a Council held at Verona prescribed with a new precision and emphasis a systematic search for heresy by all bishops, and called upon the nobles to lend their support in the way of the necessary violence. Innocent III. had thus had the way marked out for him, alike in suppression and in prevention; and the Inquisition as such dates from the close of his crusade against the

Albigenses, when Pope Gregory IX. took from the bishops the business of heresy-hunting and made it a special task of the Dominican order (1233). After "Manichæism" had been stamped out there was a lull in persecution as in heresy; but the institution remained, to prevent new growths.

The broad outcome of its work was that whereas the twelfth century had been one of intellectual dawn, and the thirteenth, despite its murderous beginning, one of diffusion of light, the fourteenth was on the whole one of stationary knowledge, save in Italy itself, where the full-grown energies of the Renaissance for the time defied repression. Indeed the Church cared little about mere unbelief, as distinct from anti-clerical heresy, where its political rule was not thereby affected; and in Italy, when anti-clericalism was once put down, its wealth made it secure. Even in Italy the literary life of the fourteenth century was rather artistic than intellectual, science and serious thought making little progress; while in northern Europe they were visibly arrested. It was in the outlying States, where heresy might mean a cessation of papal revenue, that the Dominicans were specially hounded on to their work. In England, in the latter part of the thirteenth century, the great spirit of Roger Bacon was cabined and confined by inquisitorial enmities; and in France in the fourteenth there was a signal suspension of intellectual life, in the face of the activities of original thinkers such as William of Occam. The throttling of the civilisation of the south had reacted on the north. Doubtless the desperate wars to which crusading experience had given a new incitement counted for much; and the constant political intrigues of the

papacy for more, in arresting mental growth. "When a city for any political proceeding had given offence to its political head, emperor or king, or had irritated a Roman bishop by opposition, the usual punishment, by command or interdict, was to inhibit its professors from teaching, and to disperse its scholars." All the political causes wrought together for the hindrance of human advancement. The immense destruction of population by the Black Death, finally, was a great incitement to superstition.

The main effect of the Inquisition is seen in Spain, which in the Saracen period had been one of the great sources of new thought and knowledge. There, despite the element of intellectual curiosity set up in the period of Moorish supremacy, when the Christians were in general treated with tolerance, the spirit of fanaticism was gradually ingrained by the long struggle between Christians and Moslems for the land; and an inquisitorial war on Jewish and Moorish ideas was part of the Christian campaign. As the Christians gained ground, ecclesiasticism gained with them; yet when the Inquisition, not yet a permanent Spanish tribunal, was set up in Spain in 1236, it was received by a large part of the population with fear and dislike. It is an error to suppose that there was something in "Spanish character" specially prone to the methods of the Inquisition. Spanish orthodoxy is a manufactured product, and represents the triumph, under special conditions, of the fanatical element which belongs to every nation. Not only did many eminent Spaniards detest and denounce the Inquisition in its first and imperfectly destructive form: the common people rioted against it when, in its permanent and more murderous form, it was

constituted in 1478–83, and put under Torquemada. That memorable persecutor long felt his life to be in danger from the people, both in Aragon and in Castile; and the first inquisitor-general of Aragon was actually killed by them. Yet even the "ancient" Inquisition had been fatally successful. In the two centuries from its establishment, while Averroism was rife in Italy and France, Christian Spain must have been well nigh rid of the other forms of heretical thought; and the first step of Ferdinand and Isabella after their crowning triumph was to expel all Jews who would not apostatise. On the remaining Moors the new Inquisition went to work in a similar spirit, persecuting them, baptising them by force, burning their books, and driving them repeatedly to revolts, which were always murderously put down. Finally, after the failure of the great Armada against England, the Inquisitors decided that the cause of the divine wrath was their undue toleration of heresy, and a million of nonconforming Moriscoes were miserably driven out of Spain, as a hundred and sixty thousand Jews had been a century before.

As all civilisation lives by the play of intellectual variation, Spain was now stripped of a large part of her mental as well as her material resources; and the continued work of the Inquisition at length clinched the arrest of her brilliant literature for centuries, keeping her devoid of science while the rest of Europe was gathering it. In introducing the Inquisition the Church had destroyed the specific civilisation of southern France, thereby laming that of northern France; and in thereafter applying the machine to the civilisation of Spain she reduced that to inanition.

It should be remembered that the Inquisition's purpose was to destroy books no less than men; and until printing overpowered the effort, the check thus put on the spread of rational thought bade fair to be fatal. In a single *auto-da-fé* ("act of faith") at Salamanca, near the end of the fifteenth century, six thousand volumes were burned, on the pretence that they contained Judaic errors, or were concerned with magic and witchcraft. It is certain that many of them were of another character. Elsewhere the work of destruction was less ostentatiously done, but it was constant.

In the matter of torture and slaughter, however, the work of the Inquisition has become a proverb; and after all corrections have been made on the earlier estimates by Llorente and other historians, the figures remain frightful. In "a few years," the New Inquisition burned alive, in Castile alone, nearly two thousand persons, and variously penalised some twenty thousand more. At this rate, many thousands must have been burned in a generation; and the statement that nearly two hundred thousand passed through the Spanish Inquisition's hands in thirty-six years is sadly credible. Its methods were the negation of every principle of justice. Any evidence, including that of criminals, children, and even idiots, was valid against an accused person, while only that of the most unimpeachable kind was heard in his favour; all proceedings were strictly private; false informers were almost never punished; and the general principle was that anyone who was tried must be somehow guilty, the Inquisition being like the Pope infallible. Thus, if a man could not be convicted of real heresy, he could be punished for an error in the repetition of a prayer or a creed. But the torture-

chamber can seldom have failed to yield whatever proof was sought for. No such reign of terror and horror has occurred in any other period of European history; and only in the practices of witch-finders among savages can its systematic atrocity be anywhere paralleled.

§ 3. *Classic Survivals and Saracen Contacts.*

Ancient literature, as we have seen, was nearing its nadir when Christianity was becoming supreme in the decadent Roman Empire; and with the formal extinction of classic paganism came the virtual extinction of fine letters, science, and philosophy, in the Byzantine State no less than in the West. The last Christian writers of any philosophic importance were really products of classic culture and the ancient civilisation. When that civilisation had been outwardly transformed to a Christian guise, the mental life shrank to the field of theology, with a few fenced and meagre plots of scholastic drilling-ground. Of the decayed discipline of ancient culture, Christian civilisation preserved only the most mechanical formulas; and the mental training of the Dark Ages consisted in a few handbooks (notably those by Martianus Capella and Cassiodorus) of what was then encyclopedic knowledge—the rules of Latin grammar, dialectics or elementary logic, rhetoric, music, arithmetic, elementary geometry, and some traditional astronomy. The first three constituted the Trivium or introductory course in the medieval schools; the others the Quadrivium: together "the seven liberal arts." The larger Encyclopedia of Isidore of Seville,

the standard authority for centuries, is as mechanical, as devoid of living thought, as empty of scientific knowledge, as any of the others. In the way of literature, there was left to most westerns little beyond a few of the later Latin writers, such as Boethius, who could pass muster as being Christians, Gregory the Great having set the note of theological anathema against the pagan poets and philosophers; and classic history survived only in bad abstracts.

Wherever in the Dark Ages we meet with any power of thought, it is to be traced either to the influence of Saracen contacts or, as in John Scotus, to the Greek scholarship that had been preserved in Ireland while the western empire was being dissolved in barbarism. The English Alcuin, who had loyally aided Charlemagne in his efforts to spread education in the new "Holy Roman" empire, got his culture in an atmosphere where that influence had partly survived. Beyond this, the Latin world had preserved from the past, in the law schools which never wholly died out in Italy, a professional knowledge of the Justinian code, which the Lombards and Franks had allowed to subsist for those who claimed to be judged by it, and which remained the proper law of the papal territory after Charlemagne. In the sphere of such special knowledge, though it was strictly monopolised, there was doubtless an intellectual life largely independent of religion; and there some classical culture probably always flourished.

The first effectual movements of new mental life, however, come from contact with the Saracens of Spain. While the Byzantine world let the treasures of old Greek knowledge fall from its hands, the Mohammedans in the East early acquired, at first

through the Nestorian Christians, some knowledge of Aristotle and of Greek mathematics, medicine, and astronomy; and this in the progressive Saracen period was passed on to the Moors of Spain. Thence came into the Latin world the beginnings of science, as anciently known, with the beginnings of chemistry, an Arab creation. After the period of John Scotus, all culture had for centuries decayed: the few who cared to read were monks, taught to hold pagan lore in horror; so that at the end of the ninth century even such schooling as the trivium and quadrivium was rare in what had been the realm of Charlemagne; and the later manuals, such as that of St. Remi, were even more puerile than the older. Only from new culture-contacts could new culture arise.

One of the most fruitful impulses to such life was the introduction, late in the tenth century, by Gerbert, afterwards Pope Sylvester II., of an intermediate form of the Arabic numerals, making possible the decimal notation. Gerbert had acquired in his youthful sojourn on the Spanish march—not among the Moors, as the tradition has it—some knowledge of Arab mathematics and of the logic of Aristotle; and where his predecessors in the cathedral school at Rheims had for the most part shunned the Latin classics, he used them freely in teaching rhetoric. But the impulse he gave to the science of number, so vital alike for astronomy and for chemistry, was his greatest practical service. Those who used his method of calculating were called Gerbertists; and in that still dark age even such knowledge as his gave rise to the belief that he had dealings with the devil.

The new life was slow to take root; and when in the eleventh century the English monk Adelhard

translated from the Arabic, which he had learned in his travels in Spain and Egypt, the Elements of Euclid, he found little welcome for it. Not till a century later did a fresh translation of Euclid from the Arabic, by Campanus, make its way in the schools. Algebra came from the same source, through a travelling merchant of Pisa, about the beginning of the thirteenth century. Thenceforth the infant sciences of physics held their ground, and from those beginnings became possible the lore of Roger Bacon. A genuine scientific spirit indeed was slow to grow: the ideals and ethics of religion had almost atrophied among Christians the instinct for simple truth; but the passion for astrology promoted astronomy, and the passion for gold promoted chemistry, all its practitioners hoping for the philosopher's stone, which should transmute lead into gold. Always it is from the Arabs that the impulse comes. Under the emperor Frederick II., who in his Sicilian seat gave free course to Saracen culture and thought, was first translated from the Arabic the Greek Ptolemy's great work on astronomy; and for Alphonso X. of Castile, by Moorish means, were compiled new astronomical tables. From the Arabs too came trigonometry, which even for the Greeks had not been a separate science; and only in the fifteenth century did Müller of Königsberg ("Regiomontanus"), who perfected the decimal notation, first give it new developments.

New philosophic thought came by the same paths. Between the philosophy of the Arab Averroës, with its Aristotelian basis and its lead to pantheism and materialism on the one hand, and the moral reaction set up by the Crusades on the other, the bases of Christian orthodoxy were shaken. The legend that

Frederick II. wrote a treatise entitled *The Three Impostors*, dealing with Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed, is a fable: there was probably no such book in the Middle Ages, for it would have meant death at the hands of the Inquisition to possess it; but the very phrase showed what men had become capable of thinking and saying.

As the Renaissance proceeded in Italy in the teeth of the strifes which ultimately destroyed Italian liberty, men turned with all the zest of new intelligence to the remains of Latin literature. Virgil had become for the Middle Ages a beneficent magician, a kind of classic Merlin, and as such he is framed by Dante in his great poem of the other world. Religion in Italy had been brought into something like contempt by the lives and deeds of its ministers; and only in the literature of civilised antiquity could intellectual men find at once stimulus and satisfaction. It is to be said for the popes and cardinals of Rome, now among the wealthiest princes of Christendom, that they too promoted the revival of learning by their rewards. On their urging, scholars retrieved classics from the garrets and cellars of a hundred monasteries, or from the scrolls from which they had been partly obliterated to make way for a theology that the scholars despised. Popes and cardinals themselves, indeed, were commonly held in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to care little about theology and to know less—a state of things which ultimately aided their heretical adversaries, as did the scholarship they helped to spread.

With the fall of Constantinople came the final decisive impulse to new culture in western Europe. Ecclesiastical hates, and those aroused by the

crusading conquest of Byzantium, had for centuries sundered the Greek and Latin worlds more completely than even those of Christian Europe and Islam, setting up a Chinese wall where paganism, albeit by fatal means, had effected mutual intercourse. But on the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1452, numbers of despairing Greek scholars sought refuge in the west, and were eagerly welcomed by students who desired Greek, not to acquire the theology of the Byzantines, but to read in the original the great pagan masters. Thenceforth the forces of culture in Europe became too strong for the forces of repression. It was thus by a return to the thought and science of buried paganism that Christian civilisation so-called was put on a progressive footing. So long as Aristotle, known through Latin translations made from the Arabic, was a university text-book for students of theology under ecclesiastical supervision, he was but a modified instrument of dogmatism; and his limitations were made the measure of knowledge even as the Bible had been. With the free return to the recovered lore of free Greece came a new spirit of freedom, destined to break down the reign of all dogmatisms, and to build up a lore of its own.

§ 4. *Religion and Art.*

On one line, happily, the Church of the Renaissance was able to do a service to civilisation while following its own ends. Among the apophthegms which stand critical tests is that to the effect that art has always been the handmaid of religion. So true is it that even Protestant Christianity, which at its start set its face against all pictorial expression of

religious ideas, is in our own time visibly much indebted to art for the preservation and cultivation of religious sentiment.

In antiquity, save in the anti-idolatrous cults, religion had been the great patron of imitative art, inasmuch as it made the most constant economic demand for sculptures and paintings. This law held good from Hindostan to Rome; and even Judaism and Mazdeism had perforce to subsidise architecture. That common need for splendid temples preserved architectural ideals in Byzantium when the art of the higher sculpture had utterly disappeared; and as the loss of skill in sculpture, no less than the old aversion to statues as symbols of paganism, prevented activity on that line, the Byzantines devoted themselves to the carving and painting of wooden icons, and to mosaics, pictures, and manuscript illuminations, for religious purposes. The results were constrained and unprogressive; but hence, in the Dark Ages, and during the short-lived Latin empire of Constantinople, came the models for the first pictorial art of Italy; and from that beginning, under the economic encouragement given by a priesthood whose wealth was always increasing, and whose churches and palaces constantly gained in splendour, came the immense artistic flowering of the Renaissance. After the Reformation had cut off half the sources of Italian ecclesiastical wealth, and Spanish rule had begun to ruin industry, the artistic life of Italy rapidly died away; even as in Protestant Holland, where the economic demand was non-clerical, coming mainly from a wealthy trading class who sought portraits and secular pictures, there was a rapid decline from the period of political and economic contraction.

It needed, however, the conditions of free civic life, such as prevailed in the earlier part of the Renaissance, to raise ecclesiastical art from the bondage of convention in which it had been kept by the Byzantine Church, as by the priesthood of ancient Egypt. It was the immense intellectual competition of the Italian States in their period of free growth, and even under their native despots, that bred artistic spirits such as those who perpetually widened the bounds of the arts of colour and form, from Giotto to Michel Angelo and Titian.

Under equivalent conditions took place the great evolution of architectural art in France and northern Europe. It was mainly the economic demand of the Church that evolved the admirable architecture called "Gothic"—a misnomer applied by the later artificial taste which could see beauty only in classical symmetry, and disdained the wild grace and power of the medieval architecture as mere barbarism. It was really a special development of artistic faculty. Modern fancy has ascribed to the guilds of cathedral-builders on the one hand a passion for occult lore, supposed to be the source of the modern mummery of "Freemasonry," and on the other hand a deep religious feeling, of which the cathedral is supposed to be the expression. How far this is from the truth may be gathered from a closer study of their sculptures in many of the older cathedrals and churches, which reveal not only a riotous irreverence and indecency, but at times a positive derision for the faith. Nonetheless, organised Christianity had, by its demand for their work, provided a wonderful artistic environment for a cult which could no more than those of antiquity evolve a humanity worthy of it.

CHAPTER IV.

BYZANTINE CHRISTIANITY.

THE history of Christian Byzantium, from the rise of Islam to the fall of Constantinople, is the typical instance of mental stagnation. During a period of eight hundred years, even friendly research professes to discover in Byzantine annals only one writer's name per century which posterity can be expected to keep in memory. Such a history is the complete confutation of the common theory that Christianity is in itself a force of progress; but once more we must take note that Christianity was not the determining cause of the arrest. Civilisation progresses by the contact of cultures; and where that is lacking the results are the same under all religious systems. Byzantium presents the symptoms of China, because, like China, it was politically and intellectually isolated for a whole era, under a centralised government which imposed certain norms of life and doctrine, and prevented the variation and mutual reaction that would otherwise have arisen between its provinces. Only inasmuch as it promoted and consecrated such a system was Christianity a primary factor in the resulting arrest of growth. As a matter of fact, it lent itself alternately to division and to petrifaction. In the period, to the end of the seventh century, dogma was a source of strife which dismembered the

empire: in the period of contracted empire, face to face with the Moslem enemy, religious feeling tended to prevent further disruption, very much as the Church had been unified in the pagan period by persecution.

Within the contracted empire, however, there was no durable progress. Its condensed annals give a picture which even the barbarian west could not outgo. In the period from 668 to 716 seven emperors were dethroned, four of them were put to death, one (while drunk) had his eyes put out, and two more, in addition to two brothers of emperors, had their noses cut off—punishments which in Byzantium became classical. Under Christianity there was certainly more cruelty and demoralisation than under early Islam. The Caliph Aboubekr had given to his followers those injunctions: "Be just: the unjust never prosper. Be valiant: die rather than yield. Be merciful: slay neither old men, children, nor women. Destroy neither fruit-trees, grain, nor cattle. Keep your word, even to your enemies." Only those who refused either to become Moslems or to pay tribute were to be slain. In that spirit the Caliph Moawyah rebuilt their church for the Christians of Edessa. Fifty years later, Justinian II. invaded Armenia, and on driving out the Saracens seized and sold as slaves the majority of the Christian inhabitants, reducing the richest parts of the country to desert. And when, after he had been dethroned, deprived of his nose, and exiled for ten years, he returned to triumph over his enemies, the Greek populace applauded him with Biblical quotations as he sat in the circus with his feet on his rivals' necks.

The advent of Leo the Isaurian (716) marks an epoch in Byzantine history. Acting as head of the

church, the established function of the eastern emperors, he set himself to check idolatry, first by ordering that the pictures in the churches should be placed high enough to prevent the people from kissing them. On this issue the populace and the lower clergy united against him, to the length of rebellion; and he in turn made his edicts more stringent. Whatever may have been his motives, he acted on principles afterwards founded on by Protestantism; and during a century and a half—save for a relapse from 787 to 813, in which the government was sometimes tyrannically orthodox and sometimes tolerant—his views were more or less fully maintained by succeeding rulers. It is interesting to note that, as repeatedly happened centuries later in the west, a long period of religious strife through the whole State created a party in favour of complete tolerance and liberty of conscience. But though they so far gained ground as to convert the emperor Nicephorus I. (802–811), who employed some of them in his ministry, and treated both Paulician heretics and rebels with unusual tolerance, there was no such intellectual life in Byzantium as could long sustain a tolerant policy. It is a miscalculation to suppose, as some do, that the triumph of iconoclasm would have meant the regeneration of the empire. To work regeneration there were needed further forces of variation, since Islam stagnated without image-worship as Byzantium did with it.

Leo the Armenian (813–820), who was averse to image-worship but desirous of keeping the peace, was forced by the zeal of the iconoclastic party and the obstinacy of the orthodox to resume an iconoclastic policy. Under such circumstances numbers of the

clergy became temporisers, leaving to the monks the fanatical defence of images; and as Leo himself was capable, with the approbation of both parties, of an act of the grossest treachery toward his enemy the king of the Bulgarians, it is clear that neither iconoclasm nor image-worship was raising the plane of morals. Significantly enough, it was at the beginning of the reign of Michael the Drunkard (842–867), who was professedly orthodox, but openly burlesqued the ceremonies of the church, that image-worship was definitely restored, under the regency of his fanatical mother, Theodora. The great majority were weary of the strife, and many of the iconoclasts had come to the conclusion that relative sanity in religion was not worth fighting for. For the rest, Michael was finally assassinated, as Leo the Armenian had been before him.

It was at this period that Photius, the most learned man of the Dark Ages, became Patriarch of Constantinople, in the teeth of the opposition of the Pope of Rome, who after the formal restoration of image-worship had been appealed to, as a champion of orthodoxy, for the decision of some official disputes in the Eastern church. After his position was assured, Photius effectually fought the Roman claims, completing the schism between the churches; and in his own sphere he did much for the preservation of learning, and even something for the cultivation of judgment. In theology, it is admitted by one of another school, "he made use of his own reason and sagacity"; and he is notable, in his period and place, for having reached the idea that earthquakes might not be divine portents. But Photius is the high-water-mark of Byzantine intelligence; and no man

of equal capacity and culture seems to have arisen during the six remaining centuries of the eastern empire.

It is impossible, indeed, to say whether there was not in Byzantium, behind the official scenes, a higher intellectual life. It was from Michael II. ("the Stammerer") that Louis the son of Charlemagne received (824) the copy of the writings of Dionysius "the Areopagite," from which was made the first Latin translation; and as this writer had a great influence on John Scotus, who may even have acquired his first knowledge of him from that very copy, which he translated afresh, it may be that in Greece also, where Dionysius was much admired and studied among the monks, there were deep thinkers whom he stimulated. But whereas even Scotus could reach few in the west, any higher thought there may have been in the east remained entirely latent. Learning fared better. After Photius, the East produced for posterity the important Lexicon of Suidas, which apparently belongs to the tenth century; and in the twelfth Eustathius of Thessalonica produced his valuable commentary on Homer. But the populace in the East was as ignorant and superstitious as that of the west; and the system of caste occupations or hereditary pursuits made eastern learning even a less communicable influence than western.

In the political life there were fluctuations; and though in all ages alike there were dethronements, assassinations, and mutilations of emperors and of their suspected relatives, the time of the Basilian dynasty (867–1057) was one of relative stability, with even some military glory, and temporary recovery or expansion of territory, as against Saracens and

Bulgarians. Still the sum-total of each century's life was practically stagnation. Under emperors, empresses, or eunuchs, the administration was substantially the same. Alien elements, which might under other conditions have generated new life, had entered the empire with the Slavonians, whose race, after occupying Dalmatia and Illyricum at the wish of Heraclius in the seventh century, flourished and multiplied, and invaded the Paloponnesus early in the ninth. The later iconoclastic emperors were vigorous enough to bring them to submission; but Roman imperialism and Christian ecclesiasticism between them undid all progressive influences, just as the policy of militarism and fanaticism finally did among the Saracens.

The attempts at change, indeed, were many. Conspiracies were chronic; and when one failed the conspirators were blinded according to Byzantine rule; emperors on the other hand were often unmade; but the political machinery remained the same. In the period to Heraclius, the ruling class at Constantinople were mainly of Roman stock; under the Iconoclastic emperors, who were Asiatics, it was mainly Asiatic; later it became substantially Greek, as each party drove out the other; but all alike maintained the old imperial ideals. "Men of every rank," says the historian Finlay, "were confined within a restricted circle, and compelled to act in one unvarying manner. Within the imperial palace, the incessant ceremonial was regarded as the highest branch of human knowledge.....Among the people at large, though the curial system of castes had been broken down, still the trader was fettered to his corporation, and often to his quarter or street,.....amidst

men of the same profession.....No learning, no talent, and no virtue could conduct either to distinction or wealth, unless exercised according to the fixed formulas that governed the state and the church. Hence even the merchant, who travelled over all Asia, and who supported the system by the immense duties that he furnished to the government, supplied no new ideas to society, and perhaps passed through life without acquiring any."

Yet such is the strength of the biological force of variation that even in religion there was chronic heresy. We have seen, in tracing the history of western belief in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, how a strenuous anti-clerical heresy, the Paulician, had arisen and thriven in the east, defying the bloodiest persecution, and developing in the old fashion into a force of hostility to the empire. After that heresy had been thus fatally expelled, others arose. In the twelfth century, under the theological emperor Manuel Comnenus, there was a return to the inexhaustible problem of the incarnation: men disputed as to how God could at the same time be a sacrifice and the offerer thereof; and the emperor himself, convicted of heresy, came round to the orthodox view, whatever it was. Soon the dispute took a new form, over the awkward text "My Father is greater than I"; and the emperor gave an orthodox decision which he engraved on tables of stone for the great church, denouncing death on all who taught otherwise. As usual, the dispute was not settled, and the later emperor Andronicus was fain to take down the tablets and forbid all discussion on the subject. All the while, anti-clerical and anti-ceremonial heresy persisted; and the burning alive of the monk Basil,

founder of the Gnostic Bogomiles, did not mend matters. The brutal sack and pillage of Constantinople by the Latin crusaders, and the generation of western tyranny that followed, did much to unify the Greek people of the thirteenth century in a common hatred of their masters, whom they at length cast out; but this, again, meant no new intellectual life. To the last, there was a sufficiency of static Greek scholarship to preserve much of the ancient heritage for the time when the Turks should scatter it through the west; but no Byzantine name belongs to the roll of light-givers in the age of the Renaissance.

If we search for the bearing of religion on the popular life during the thousand years of the eastern empire, the conclusion will remain very much the same as that reached by a study of the conditions of the first centuries of established Christianity. Boundless credulity, boundless superstition, and zealous idolatry, are the standing features from the seventh century onwards. Conduct was substantially what it had been in pagan times; and whatever might be the legal status of those born in slavery, the myriads of captives enslaved in every successful war can have had no better lot than those of the ancient world. Doubtless the lot of the Byzantine people in the mass was better than that of the westerns of the Dark Ages insofar as they were artisans living under a regular government; but in the rural districts and outlying regions they can have fared no better, either in peace or war. When the Saracens wrested Crete and Sicily from Byzantium early in the ninth century, the majority of the inhabitants seem to have been little loth to turn Moslems. "In almost every case in which the Saracens conquered Christian nations,"

says the Christian historian already quoted, "history unfortunately reveals that they owed their success chiefly to the favour with which their progress was regarded by the mass of the people. To the disgrace of most Christian governments, it will be found that their administration was more oppressive than that of the Arabian conquerors." We have already seen that both the Arabs and the Mongols, as apart from the Turks, were by far the more tolerant. When the Byzantine empire recovered Crete in the tenth century, its rulers planned to exterminate the Saracen population; and though the purpose was not carried out, the Saracens who remained were reduced to virtual serfdom.

Of the moral and intellectual unprogressiveness of Byzantium we may say, finally, that the Christian State, like those of the Saracens and the Turks, was in large measure kept stationary precisely by the relation of constant strife set up by the existence of the enemy. Each was the curse of its antagonist. And Christianity did no more to raise men above that deadlock of enmity than did Islam; nay, the further factor of Byzantine isolation represented by the rupture between the Greek and Latin churches was a special product of the Christian system.

PART IV.—MODERN CHRISTIANITY.

CHAPTER I.

THE REFORMATION.

§ 1. *Moral and Intellectual Forces.*

As early as the eleventh century, we have seen at work in both eastern and western Europe movements of popular resistance at once to the religious claims and the financial methods of the Christian priesthood, to the dogmas on which those claims and methods proceeded, and to the ceremonialism which backed them. Early in the thirteenth century, the region in which such heresy had most largely spread was systematically warred upon by armies called out by the Church, and there the movement was destroyed by many years of bloodshed, the once heretical territory becoming a centre of orthodox fanaticism. The scattered seeds, however, bore fresh fruit, and in the fourteenth century movements of thought, some of which were no less deeply heretical, and many no less anti-hierarchical, went far in the west and north of Europe. Still they failed to effect any revolution; and in the middle of the fifteenth century the Church of Rome, corrupt as its rulers were, might have seemed to calculating observers more surely established than ever before. It had passed through a long and

scandalous series of papal schisms, and its power seemed strengthened by reunion after a century and a half of divisions.

Heretical forces of course there were, several of the leading sects of the fourteenth century being still active, especially in Germany and the Low Countries. Thus the Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit, who leant to pantheism in doctrine and to some degree of antinomianism in practice, persisted in spite of persecution, as did the kindred movements of Beghards or Turlupins; members of these and similar sects even found shelter in the lower order of the Franciscans, Dominicans, and Augustinians; and in Italy and France the heretical Franciscan Fraticelli still obstinately fought the papacy, which followed them up with fire and sword. But there are no signs that the papacy had thus far been shaken; and more than one anti-clerical movement had died out. Thus in England Lollardry had virtually disappeared in the reign of Henry VI.; and in Bohemia, where the Wiclifian John Huss in the opening years of the century had preached vehemently against clerical and papal abuses, not only had he been burned alive on the sentence of the Council of Constance (1415), in iniquitous disregard of the emperor's letter of safe-conduct, but his followers, after long and savage wars in which great numbers were burned alive and they themselves broke up into two sections, had finally been either reconciled to the church or reduced to peaceful nonconformity.

Nowhere could the anti-papal spirit be said to be dangerously strong; nor was it much regarded by the popes. A little earlier than Huss, Matthew of Cracow, Bishop of Worms, had written "On the

Pollutions (*de squaloribus*) of the Roman Curia," but he was never molested. It does not seem, further, that the cause of the cruel sentence on Huss was so much his attacks on the clergy or the papacy as the enmities he had aroused (1) in what passed for philosophy (he being a zealous "Realist," and as such hated by the Nominalists, who were strong in the Council), and (2) on the side of nationality, he being a Czech nationalist and a vehement enemy of the German race and interest, which also were present in force. And though the cruelty and the gross treachery of the sentence on Huss, and the infliction of the same cruel death on Jerome of Prague in the following year, roused a furious revolt among the Hussites, they awoke no general sympathy in Europe.

As the fifteenth century wore on, fresh movements of anti-papal feeling rose, and some were put down. A professor of theology at the university of Erfurt, John of Wesel (not to be confounded with John Wessel, also a critical reformer in theology, but never persecuted), began about the middle of the century to write against indulgences; and when he became a popular preacher at Mayence and Worms he carried his criticism further. The result was that in 1479 he was arraigned before a "court of Inquisition" at Mayence and cast into prison, where he soon died. Wesel was a Nominalist, and as such was no less hated by the Realists than Huss had been by the Nominalists; but since he was also denounced as a Hussite, and was further an extremely free-tongued assailant of the hierarchy, there is reason in his case to suppose a professional animus. Still there was no formidable movement. Before John of Wesel, the Netherlander John of Goch, Confessor to the Nuns of

Tabor (d. 1475), had opposed both monasticism and episcopal power; but he was associated with the orthodox Brethren of the Common Lot, and had criticised the antinomian morals of the Brethren of the Free Spirit, so that he hardly figured as a heretic. John Wessel, again (d. 1489), anticipated, as Luther declared, most of the latter's doctrines; but though he wandered in France and Italy, studied and taught at Paris, and was a professor at Heidelberg, exercising a wide influence, he never roused enmity enough to bring him into trouble. On the other hand, Savonarola's strong dissentient movement at Florence, as we have already noted, fell with him in 1498.

All the while, nevertheless, there was proceeding an intellectual process which had not before been possible—a permeation of the northern part of the continent, especially Germany, by a spirit of comparatively orthodox anti-Romanism, based on a growing scholarship, which found in the sacred books themselves a basis for its course. The scholarly impulse had come from Italy, where it had been fostered by the papacy itself; but in the north it had a different social and political effect. In Germany and the Netherlands, to begin with, elementary education was gaining ground. The Brethren of the Common Lot had done much for it, and many of their pupils started fresh schools, which weakened the first, but carried further their work. At the same time sprang up new universities; those of Tübingen, Mayence, Wittemberg, and Frankfort-on-the-Oder being founded between 1477 and 1506. In the higher Biblical scholarship, further, there had begun a new era. Laurentius Valla's "Notes on the New Testament" created a spirit of scholarlike criticism; and

John Reuchlin, after a training in France, began in Germany an equally vigorous movement of Hebrew scholarship by producing the first Hebrew grammar. Numbers of educated men were now in a position of practical intellectual superiority to the great mass of the clergy; and all the while the process of translating the New Testament or the gospels into the modern languages for the use of the unlearned was going on in all the more civilised countries. There were German translations before Luther; Wiclif's versions had been current in England among the Lollards; and French and Italian versions had been made by several hands in the fifteenth century. The important result was that anti-clerical heresy began to claim to be the stricter orthodoxy, and the church could no longer bracket the sin of anti-clericalism with that of rejecting the leading Christian dogmas. Thus, when Erasmus of Rotterdam began with a new and remarkable literary skill to write Latin satires on the old text of the vices and ignorance of the monks and other clergy, he had such an audience as no man had yet had on that theme. In Petrarch's day, a century before, though he too had exclaimed like every other educated man at the corruption of the papal court and system, humanist literature was still largely a matter of exquisite art for art's sake; in that of Erasmus it had begun to handle the most vital intellectual and moral interests.

Yet, though such an intellectual ferment was a condition precedent of the Reformation, it was not the proximate cause of the explosion. The doctrinal movement is seen at its strongest after Luther's disruptive work had been done, in the allied movement set up in France by Calvinism. More perhaps than in

Geneva itself, the Huguenot cause in France was one of moral and intellectual revolt, certainly fanatical but in large measure disinterested. What precipitated the Reformation in Germany was the coalition of the decisive economic interest of the self-seeking nobles, and the anti-Roman national sentiment of the people, with the moral and doctrinal appeal of Luther.

§ 2. *Political and Economic Forces.*

Even the grievance of indulgence-selling, which gave the immediate provocation to Luther's action, was an economic as well as a moral question. Many of the best Catholics were entirely at one with him and such of his predecessors as Wesel and Wessel in deploring and denouncing the form the traffic had taken. The process of farming out the sale of indulgences to districts, as governments farmed out the taxes, was enough to stagger all men capable of independent judgment; and the expedition of the Dominican monk Tetzel had reduced it to something like burlesque. Yet it was typical of what papal administration had become. Archbishop Albert of Mayence and Magdeburg, who was also margrave of Brandenburg, owed the Pope the usual large sum for his investiture, and could not pay. The Pope, Leo X., greatly needed money for his building outlays; and the supreme prince of the church gave to the lesser permission to set up in his province a vigorous trade in indulgences. For this trade Tetzel was selected, not by the Pope but by the Archbishop, as a notoriously suitable tool. Albert in turn made a financial arrangement with the great German banking

house of Fuggers, and their agent accompanied Tetzel to take care of the cash. Thus, though the transaction was strictly a German one, the procedure was externally one of bleeding a German province, through its superstition, in the financial interest of Rome. Well-informed people knew that the papal agent carried off at least the archbishop's debt; and others might plausibly surmise that there had gone a million thalers more, as the takings had been abnormally great.

Obviously the mass of the citizens were superstitious believers, otherwise the traffic could not have gone on; and Luther in his pulpit began merely by opposing the abuse of the practice, not the canonical principle. In absolution, he correctly argued, there were according to the established doctrine three elements—contrition, confession, and remission of penalties; and indulgences could effect only the third. He accordingly refused to absolve any on the mere ground of an indulgence; whereupon Tetzel, finding his traffic thus ostensibly hampered, preached against him, and the historic battle began. The theses nailed to the Wittemberg church door by Luther (1517) did not assail the Church or the Pope; they simply challenged on orthodox lines the abuse of indulgences; and when Luther began to publish his views he expressed himself with perfect submission to the Pope.

What won him the support of a vigorous popular party, albeit a minority, and of a sufficient section of the nobility, was in the first place his courage, and in the second place the growing restiveness of the Germans as such under what was practically an Italian domination. In past history, the "Germanic empire"

had been wont to lord it over Italy on feudal grounds, and it was always a sore point with many that Italy none the less received an increasing tribute from Germany as from other States. The blunder of the Papacy in Luther's case lay in not realising how far such feelings, in connection with a fresh scandal, might go in setting up a northern tide of anti-Roman animus. So long wont to browbeat all insubordination, and to decide doctrinal disputes by fiat instead of by persuasion, it either prescribed or permitted to its agents the usual tone in their dealings with Luther; and finally the Pope thought to clinch matters by a bull (1520) against his doctrines, giving him his choice between submission and excommunication. His defiance, and the act of excommunication, duly followed, and the Protestant Church began.

Even now the Papacy, witless of new developments, could very well suppose the new heresy transient. Charles V., the new Emperor, was thoroughly orthodox; and not many of the German nobles were ostensibly otherwise. But Charles was under a deep obligation to Frederick the Elector of Saxony for his election; and Frederick was one of those who had begun, for racial and financial reasons, to contemplate "home rule" in matters ecclesiastical. Frederick accordingly was allowed to protect Luther, whose courage in going to the Diet of Worms, with Huss's fate in common memory, further established his popular influence. Manhood always loves manhood. After 1526, however, the process of the Reformation in Germany was substantially one of wholesale confiscation of church lands and goods by the nobles, who were thus irrevocably committed to the cause; and though Luther and his more single-minded colleagues were naturally

disgusted, there was no other way in which they could have won, popular sympathy counting for nothing in such a matter without military force.

A rupture took place, finally, between the Emperor and the new Medicean Pope, Clement VII., over the desperate politics of Italy, the Papacy for once taking a national course in resisting an imperialist invasion. But the invaders triumphed; Italy was overrun anew; Rome was sacked (1527) with all the atrocity which historically distinguishes the Christian conquests of the city from those of the ancient Gauls and Goths; and during the critical years of the establishment of Protestantism the emperor was in no mood to quarrel with his German friends in the interest of a Pope whose friendship he could not trust. All the political conditions were thus abnormally favourable to the Lutheran movement. At the same time, every menace from Rome led naturally to intensification of the Lutheran heresy; and though it always remained much nearer Catholicism than did Calvinism, it emphasized more and more its differences.

In the meantime the success of the movement of Zwingli at Zurich had proved independently that the strength of the Reformation lay in its appeal to economic interest. Confiscation of the possessions of the Church by the municipal authorities was a first step, and one for which, once taken, the community would fight rather than revoke it. With signal unwisdom, the Roman curia had contrived to allot most of the Swiss town livings to Italians, so that the vested interests were alien and not local. The municipality, on the other hand, sagaciously pacified those interests by guaranteeing pensions or posts as teachers or preachers to the whole twenty-four canons of the

chapter; and there and in some other cantons the economic Reformation, thus effected, was permanent.

In the case of England, on the other hand, the primary factor in the repudiation of papal rule was the personal insistence of Henry VIII. on a divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, the aunt of the emperor, Charles V. Henry was so far from being inclined to Protestantism that he caused to be compiled by his bishops (1521) a treatise in reply to Luther, to which he put his name, thereupon receiving from Leo X. the title of "Defender of the Faith." To the very last, he burned doctrinal Protestants as heretics, and despite revival of the old Lollard propaganda the country remained substantially Catholic in creed. But when it came to the king's demand for a divorce, the Pope, Clement VII., was in a hopeless dilemma, since if he granted the request, which he was personally and theologically not unwilling to do, he would exasperate the emperor Charles, of whom he dreaded to make an irreconcilable enemy, besides offending the whole Catholicism of Spain and even much of that of England. When once Henry decided to take ecclesiastical rule into his own hands, he found that, little as he liked the new doctrines, he must in his own interest proceed to confiscate church lands and bestow the bulk of them on adherents, thereby establishing a firm anti-papal interest. So little way did positive Protestant doctrine make that when his daughter Mary came to the throne, though she dared not try to resume the church lands, the people were in substantial sympathy with her faith, and only her marriage with Philip and her persecution of heretics turned any large number against her. Even under Elizabeth, it was the new national enmity to Spain,

and not religious propaganda, that made the bulk of the people Protestant in creed and worship.

The process of the Reformation in Scotland clearly follows the economic law. So late as 1535 Scotland was so Catholic in belief, despite the usual grievances against priestly rapacity and luxury, that the parliament passed a law forbidding all importation of the writings of Luther, forbidding discussions of his "damnable opinions." But as soon as the English king by his confiscation of the rich monastery lands (1536–39) showed the Scots nobles how they might enrich themselves by turning Protestant, they began to favour heresy; and from the death of the last Catholic king, James V. (1542), throughout the minority of his daughter Mary, they protected the reforming preachers. In 1543 began the wrecking of monasteries by mobs; in 1546 was assassinated Cardinal Beaton, who had taken active steps to destroy heresy; and though the ferocious war with England delayed developments, as did the regency of the Queen's French mother, the preaching of Calvinism by John Knox and others carried enough of the townspeople to make easy the passing, in 1560, of an Act which made Protestantism the established religion of the country. As usual, by far the greater part of the plunder went to the landowning class, who brazenly broke all their promises of endowment to the preachers. But the latter had perforce to submit, indignant as they were; and when the young Catholic queen Mary arrived in 1561 she found a Protestant kingdom, in which the most powerful class was rich with church spoils. Again the political and the economic forces had been the obviously determining factors in the change.

Scandinavian Protestantism, in turn, moved on the same line of economic opportunity and pressure. A popular movement seems to have begun in Denmark, but it was favoured by the throne; and the nobles, seeing the possibilities of the case, soon followed; whereupon King Christian III., who ruled both Denmark and Norway, suppressed Catholicism with the nobles' help, and confiscated the rich possessions of the bishops. In Sweden, on the other hand, Gustavus Vasa took the initiative against the clergy, who had supported the Danish rule which he succeeded in throwing off; and he naturally had with him the mass of the laity, especially when he gave the nobles leave to reclaim the lands that had been granted by their ancestors to the monasteries. Doctrinal Protestantism followed in the wake of confiscation.

The Protestantism of Holland, again, was plainly the result of the mismanagement of Philip II. When Protestantism had in other countries reached its fullest extension, the Low Countries were still mainly Catholic, only a few of the poorer classes having changed, apart from the Anabaptist movement, which had a much larger following; and the slaughter of such heretics by the Inquisition went on for many years with the acquiescence of the middle and upper orders. In the Netherlands, the local Inquisition, conducted by natives, was positively more cruel than that of Spain. It is thus clear that there was no special bias to Protestantism in the "Teutonic" races as such. The orthodox Protestant movement entered Holland not from the German but from the French side; and it needed not only the ferocity but the rapacity of Alva to create a permanent Protestant

and rationalist movement among the needy nobility. When the Protestant mobs began to resort to image-breaking they put their cause in great peril. The real reason of the slowness of the nobles to turn Protestant was, doubtless, that they had little to gain from plunder of their Church in any case, it having long been abnormally poor by reason of the restrictive policy of the Flemish and Dutch feudal princes in the past. When the rupture with Spain was complete, the Church estates were scrupulously disposed of in the public interest, Dutch Protestantism being thus exceptionally clean-handed.

Philip's attempts to enrich the priesthood were certainly part of the provocation he gave his subjects in the Netherlands; but their resentment was at the outset strictly political, not religious; and it is reasonable to say that had he chosen to reside among them and conciliate them he could easily have kept them Catholic, while in that case Spain might very well have become Protestant, and Dutch and Flemish resources would have been turned against Spanish disaffection. Even in what remained the Spanish Netherlands, Catholicism entirely recovered its ground. The Teutonic Charles V. had been as rigidly Catholic as his predecessors on the Spanish throne, and for the same reasons, (1) that the Church in his dominions helped him and did not thwart him; and (2) that his large revenues from the Netherlands made it unnecessary for him to plunder the Church as did the Scandinavian kings and Henry VIII.

In the case of France, where Protestantism reached its highest development in point of intellectual and militant energy, but became stationary after a generation of desperate strife, and later decayed, the play of

political and economic causation is little less clear. There, as has been said, there was much less ostensible pressure of wealth-seeking interest on the side of the Reformation than in Germany and elsewhere; yet so far as the nobles were concerned an economic motive was certainly at work. At the outset of his reign, Francis I. had won from the Pope, practically at the sword's point, the concession (1516) of the right to appoint bishops and abbots, the papacy in return receiving the *annates*, or first year's revenue. The result was that the Gallican Church was at least as corrupt as any other section of the fold, its dignities being usually bestowed on court favourites, whose exactions exasperated the rural gentry as much as those of papal nominees would have done. The throne being strong, however, and the king having no special financial motive to go further, the cause of reform had no help from his side. Had he turned "reformer," as he once had some thought of doing, he could probably have made France Protestant with less difficulty than Henry VIII. met with in England; but in view of the political divisions set up by Lutheranism in Germany he decided against the new propaganda.

That, nevertheless, proceeded. There had always been keen criticism of the church in France; and as early as 1512 there began at Meaux a reform movement on substantially Protestant lines, under the auspices of the local bishop. He, however, was put down by the threats of the college of the Sorbonne, the ecclesiastical faculty of the university of Paris; and the first notable signs of anti-Romanism came from the Vaudois of Provence, a small population which had been settled there after the virtual

extermination of their predecessors of the same name and stock in the thirteenth century, and who were latterly found to have the same anti-clerical tendencies. Under Louis XII. the Church had sought to punish them, but he refused to permit it, declaring them better people than the orthodox. Finding themselves in sympathy with the Reform movement, they sent some of their own preachers to Switzerland and Germany (1530) to learn from it, and began a similar propaganda. Decrees were issued against them in 1535 and 1540, but Francis proposed to spare them on condition that they should enter the Church of Rome. This policy failing, and Francis having made a treaty with Charles V., under which, on papal pressure, he agreed to put down heresy, the Vaudois were given up to coercion. There ensued a massacre so vile (1545) that the king, now near his end, was revolted by it, declaring that his orders had been grossly exceeded. A slow process of inquiry, left to his son, dragged on for years, but finally came to nothing.

The Vaudois had been nearly exterminated, in the old fashion; but the massacre served to proclaim and spread their doctrine, which rapidly gained ground among the skilled artizan class as well as among the nobles, the Swiss printing-presses doing it signal service. Persecution, as usual, kept pace with propaganda; and in 1557 Pope Paul IV., with the king's approval, decreed that the Inquisition should be set up in France, where it had never yet been established. The legal "parliament" of Paris, jealous for its privileges, successfully resisted; but the Sorbonne and the Church carried on the work of heretic-burning, till at length the Huguenots were driven

to arms (1562). Their name had come from that of the German-speaking *Eidgenossen* ("oath-fellows") of Switzerland; but their doctrine was that of Calvin, who, driven from France (1533), was now long established at Geneva; and their tenacity showed the value of his close-knit dogmatism as a political inspiration. Catholic fanaticism and treachery on the one hand, and Huguenot intemperance on the other, brought about eight furious civil wars in the period 1562–1594. The high-water mark of wickedness in that generation was the abominable Massacre of St. Bartholomew (1572), which followed on the third truce, and roused a new intensity of hatred. So evenly balanced were the forces that only after more than twenty years of further convulsions was the strife ended by the politic decision of the Protestant Henry of Navarre to turn Catholic and so win the crown (1594), on the score that "Paris was well worth a Mass." He thus secured for his Protestant supporters a perfect toleration, which he confirmed by the Edict of Nantes (1597).

In Poland and Bohemia, where also Protestantism went far, on bases laid by the old movements of the Hussites, the process was at first facilitated, as in Germany, by the political conditions; and the economic motive was clearly potent. The subsequent collapse and excision of Protestantism in those countries, as in France, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, completes the proof that for the modern as for the ancient world political and economic forces are the determinants of a creed's success or failure, culture movements being, as it were, the force of variation which they condition.

§ 3. *Social and Political Results.*

On the side of daily life, it fared with Protestantism as with the early Church: where it was warred upon it was circumspect; where it had easier course it was lax. Thus we have the express admission of Luther that under Protestantism he found less spirituality around him than there had been under Romanism; and there is abundant evidence that the first effect of the new regimen in Germany was to promote what Catholic and Protestant teachers alike professed to think the most serious form of immorality—sexual licence. In point of fact, Luther's own doctrines of predestination and grace were a species of unbought indulgences, sure to injure good morals, even apart from the effect of a free use of the Bible as a working code. Some of Luther's fellow-preachers justified and practised bigamy; and he and his colleagues not only counselled Henry VIII. to marry a second time without divorcing his first queen, but gave their official consent, albeit reluctantly, to such a proceeding on the part of the Landgrave of Hesse. Among the common people, the new sense of freedom quickly gave a religious impulse to the lamentable Peasants' War, and later to the so-called Anabaptist movement, which, though it contained elements of sincerity and virtue that are not always acknowledged, amounted in the main to a movement of moral and social chaos.

Luther, during whose time of hiding in the Wartburg (1521-1522) the new ferment began at Wittemberg, came thither to denounce it as a work of Satan; but it was a sequel of his own action. The new leaders, Storch and Münzer and Carlstadt, had turned

as he had advised to the Bible, and there they found texts for whatever they were minded to try, from image-smashing to the plunder and burning of monasteries and castles, and a general effort at social revolution. In all they did, they declared and believed they were moved by the Spirit of God. Luther had done this service to Catholicism, that his course led to the practical proof that the Bible, put in the hands of the multitude as the sufficient guide to conduct, wrought far more harm than good. Peasant revolts, indeed, had repeatedly occurred in Germany before his time, the gross tyranny of the nobles provoking them; but the religious frenzy of Münzer gave to the rising of 1524-25 in Swabia and Franconia, though the formulated demands of the insurgents were just and reasonable, a character of wildness and violence seldom seen before. Luther, accordingly, to save his own position, vehemently denounced the rising, and hounded on the nobles to its bloody suppression, a work in which they needed no urging. His protector, the wise Frederick of Saxony, then on his deathbed, gave no such evil counsel, but advised moderation, and admitted the guilt of his order towards the common people. The end was, however, that at least 100,000 peasants were slain; and the lot of those left was worse than before. The later Anabaptist movement, which set up a short-lived republic (1535) in the city of Münster in Westphalia, and spread to Holland, was too destitute of political sanity to gain any but visionaries, and was everywhere put down with immense bloodshed.

Yet vaster social and political evils were to come from the Reformation. In 1526, at the Diet of Spires, the emperor Charles V. called for strong measures

against Lutheranism, but was firmly resisted by the new Elector of Saxony and the other Lutheran princes, whereupon the emperor waived his claim, not caring to raise a war in the Pope's interest; and it was agreed that each head of a State in the empire should take his own way in regard to religion, his subjects being at his disposal. It was at this stage that the German Reformation began its most decisive progress. In the next few years the Papal party, backed by the Emperor, twice carried decrees rescinding that of 1526. First came the decree of the second Diet of Spires (1529). Against this a formal protest was made to the emperor by the Lutheran princes and a number of the free imperial cities of Germany and Switzerland, whence arose first the title of "Protestants." In 1530 the emperor convened a fresh Diet at Augsburg, to which the Lutherans were required to bring a formal Confession of Faith. This was framed on conciliatory lines; but the emperor issued a fresh coercive decree, whereupon the Germans formed the defensive League of Smalkald, from which the Swiss were excluded on their refusal to sign the Augsburg Confession. At this stage the invasion of Austria by the Turks delayed civil war, so that Luther was able to die in peace (1546). Then war began, and the Protestant League was quickly and thoroughly overthrown by the emperor. After a few years, however, the imperial tyranny, exercised through Spanish troops, forced a revolt of the Protestant princes, who with the help of France defeated Charles (1552). Now was effected the Peace of Augsburg (signed 1555), which left the princes as before to determine at their own will whether their States should be Lutheran or Catholic, and entitled

them to keep what church lands they had confiscated before 1552. No protection whatever was decreed for Calvinists, with whom the Lutherans had long been at daggers drawn, and who had not yet gained much ground in Germany.

Such a peace failed to settle the vital question as to whether in future the Protestant princes could make further confiscations, on the plea of the conversion of Catholic bishops and abbots or otherwise. As the century wore on, accordingly, the princes "secularised" many more Church estates; and as Protestantism was all the while losing moral ground in Germany through the adoption of Calvinism by several princes, and the bitter quarrels of the sects and sub-sects, the Catholics held the more strongly to their view of the Augsburg treaty, which was that all bishoprics and abbeys held directly from the emperor were to remain Catholic. Friction grew from decade to decade, and, civic wisdom making no progress on either side, a number of the Lutherans and Calvinists at length formed (1608) a militant union, led by the Calvinist prince Christian of Anhalt, to defend their gains; and the Catholics, led by Maximilian, Duke of Bavaria, formed another. The Calvinists were the chief firebrands; and Christian was bent on aggression, to the end of upsetting the power of the Catholic House of Austria.

The train, however, was fired from Bohemia, where the Protestant nobles were at odds with their two successive kings, Matthias and Ferdinand, both of that house, and both bent on putting down Protestantism on the crown lands. The nobles began a revolt in a brutally lawless fashion; and when, in a winter pause of the war, Ferdinand was elected emperor

(1619), they deposed him from the throne of Bohemia, and elected in his place the Calvinist prince Frederick, Elector Palatine (son-in-law of James I. of England), who foolishly accepted. The capable Maximilian, with Tilly for general, took the field on behalf of Ferdinand; the Lutheran princes stood aloof from Frederick, who for his own part had offended his Lutheran subjects by slighting their rites; his few allies could not sustain him, and he was easily defeated and put to headlong flight. At once the leading Protestant nobles of Bohemia were put to death; their lands were confiscated; the clergy of the chief Protestant body, the Bohemian Brethren, dating back to the time of Huss, were expelled in mass; and Protestantism in Bohemia was soon practically at an end. Many of both the Lutheran and Calvinist churches, in their resentment at the slackness of the German Protestant League, voluntarily went over to Catholicism. At the same period the Protestant Prince of Transylvania had been in alliance with the Turks to attack Vienna; and the Protestant faith was thus discredited on another side.

Meantime, however, the Thirty Years' War had begun. Frederick's general, Mansfeld, held out for him in the Palatinate; the dissolution of the army of the Protestant Union supplied him with fresh soldiers, content to live by plunder; English volunteers and new German allies joined; and the struggle went from bad to worse. The failure or defeat of the first Protestant combatants brought others upon the scene: James of England appealed to Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden and Christian IV. of Denmark to join him in recovering the Palatinate for his son-in-law, and, unable to subsidise Gustavus as he required, made

terms with Christian, who at once entered the war. Thereupon the emperor employed Wallenstein, and the Protestants were defeated and hard pressed, till the great Gustavus came to their aid. Under his masterly leadership they regained their ground, but could not decisively triumph. After his death at the battle of Lützen (1632) new developments took place, France entering the imbroglio by way of weakening her enemies Austria and Spain, the two pillars of the empire; and one era of war passed into another without stay or respite.

In the course of this inconceivable struggle children grew to middle age, and men grew from youth to grey hairs; most of those who began the strife passed away ere it had ended; the French Richelieu rose to greatness and died; and the English Civil War passed through nearly its whole course, a mere episode in comparison. When at length there was signed the Peace of Westphalia (1648), the German world was reduced to mortal exhaustion. The armies on both sides had been to the common people as the monstrous dragons of fable, bestial devourers, dealing ruin to friend and foe alike. Every sack of a city was a new triumph of cruelty and wickedness; tortures were inflicted by the mercenaries which almost redeemed the name of the Inquisition; and, as of old in the Ireland of Elizabeth's day, peasants were found dead with grass in their mouths. According to some calculations, half of the entire population of Germany was gone; and it is certain that in many districts numbers and wealth, man and beast, had been reduced in a much greater proportion, whole provinces being denuded of live stock, and whole towns going to ruin. German civilisation had been

thrown back a full hundred years, morally and materially. No such procession of brutality and vice as followed the armies of Tilly and Wallenstein had been seen since the first Crusade; and the generation which had seen them and been able to survive them was itself grown callous. Capacity, culture, and conduct had alike fallen below the levels of a century before.

By the Peace of Westphalia were settled the boundaries of the two creeds which had thus battled for a whole generation. In Germany, proselytism was at an end; but the States whose princes had been Protestant remained so, they and their Catholic neighbours keeping the right to impose their faith on their subjects. Protestantism had gained nothing beyond rooting Catholicism more completely out of Protestant States; and, on the other hand, the Catholics had rooted heresy out of theirs. No racial dividing-line subsisted. Teutonic Bavaria and Austria remained Catholic, as the five original Teutonic cantons of Switzerland had done from the first; and between Lutherans and Calvinists, of whatever stock, there remained a sullen doctrinal division. Bohemia had been lost to Protestantism, and Poland was now far on the way to the same fate.

The diverse cases of Poland and France here supply yet another lesson in economic causation. In France at the accession of Henry IV. the Protestants were a very strong party, including many of the nobles, though a minority of the nation; in Poland, at the accession of Sigismund III. in 1586, they were considerably stronger. Within half-a-century they were in full decadence in both countries, from similar causes. Sigismund (the cousin of Gustavus Adolphus), though

grandson of the Protestant Gustavus Vasa of Sweden, had been bred a Catholic with a view to his inheriting the Polish crown; and from the day of his accession he set himself to the aggrandisement of his creed. He thereby lost the crown of Sweden, but he went far to make Poland Catholic; and the newly constituted order of Jesuits did the rest. To the Polish crown belonged the right of conferring life appointments to which were attached great tracts of crown land; and the constant use of this economic force for Catholicism during a long reign began the downfall of the Protestantism of the nobility, who, though including many men of superior capacity, had been moved as usual by the economic motive in their heresy. The complete ascendancy of the Jesuits during the seventeenth century ultimately wrought the ruin of Poland, their policy having expelled the Protestants, alienated the Cossacks, who belonged to the Greek Church, and paralysed the intellectual life of the nation.

In France, the decay of Protestantism was effected substantially by economic means. When Richelieu obtained power the Huguenot party was strong, turbulent, intolerant, and aggressive. Practising on the one hand a firm political control, and on the other a strict tolerance, he began the policy of detaching the ablest nobles from the Huguenot interest by giving them positions of the highest honour and trust, the holding of which soon reconciled them to the court. Thus deprived of leaders who were men of the world, the Huguenot party fell into the hands of its fanatical clergy, under whose guidance it became more aggressive, and so provoked fresh civil war. The balance of military power being now easily on the side of the crown, the revolts were decisively

put down; and the policy of anti-ecclesiasticism and toleration, persisted in by Richelieu and carried on after him by Mazarin, prevented any further strife. Thus French Protestantism was irretrievably on the decline when Louis XIV., reverting to the politics of Catholic bigotry, and not content with setting on foot cruel persecutions which drove many from the country despite the laws against emigration, committed the immense and criminal blunder of revoking the Edict of Nantes (1685), and so expelling from France the remnant of the Huguenots. He had been advised that the refusal of liberty of worship would bring them to the Church, and that they could be hindered from emigrating. On the contrary, his plan lost to France fifty thousand families of industrious inhabitants, whose Protestantism had ceased to be turbulent, though it remained austere; and by thus grievously weakening a kingdom already heavily bled by his wars, the French king prepared his own military humiliation, and the consequent depression of his church.

The alarm and resentment set up by his act counted for much in stirring the English people three years later to resist their Romanising king James II., who, had he gone his way more prudently, might have done much to rehabilitate Catholicism in virtue of the fanatical devotion to the throne already developed by the reaction against the Puritan rebellion. On the other hand, the tyrannous policy which had kept Ireland Catholic, by identifying Protestantism with oppression, and Catholicism with the national memories, was cruelly carried on by England, with the result of maintaining a perpetual division between the two countries, and preparing a great source of Catholic population for the United States in a later age. The

profound decivilisation inflicted on Ireland by Protestant England is probably the greatest of the social and political evils resulting from the Reformation; but the persecution of dissenters in England, and the more savage dragooning of Presbyterians in Scotland under Charles II. and James II., must go to the same account. Nowhere, not even in Protestant Switzerland—save in the case of Zurich, well led by Zwingli, and in that of the Grisons, where Catholics and Protestants agreed to abolish feudal abuses—did the Reformation work social betterment for the common people. In England the tyranny of the Protestant nobles under Edward VI. was both corrupt and cruel; and the Norfolk rising of 1549 was as savagely suppressed as that of Wat Tyler had been in Catholic times.

In the processes by which Protestantism lost ground, as in those by which Catholicism counteracted its own successes, there was a considerable play of intellectual forces, which we shall consider apart. But though the economic, the political, and the intellectual forces always interact, the two former have had a potency which has thus far been little acknowledged. It is essential to realise that they have affected the movement of thought more than they have been affected by it; and above all that they, and not the imaginary bias of race, have determined the total fortunes of the Reformation.

§ 4. *Intellectual Results.*

The intellectual reactions set up by the Reformation were complex, and on some sides apparently contradictory. Some populations, and in general the

populace of the countries which remained Protestant, were made collectively more fanatical than they had been under Catholicism, even as Catholicism itself became for a time more strenuous under the stress of the conflict; but, on the other hand, there grew up on the intellectual border of Protestantism forms of heresy which outraged its majority; and within the political sphere of Catholicism there came a new growth of scepticism. All these varying results can be traced to the initial shock of the revolt against Rome.

Luther and Calvin, it is clear, were alike bigots, as little disposed to religious toleration as the papacy ever was. Of Pope Paul III. (1534-49) it is recorded that he "bore with contradiction in the consistory, and encouraged freedom of discussion." No such tribute could be paid to the Protestant leaders of his day. Indeed, it is noteworthy that while the Catholic hierarchy of the period were not a little open to new scientific thought, Luther derided the teaching of Copernicus, and would have suppressed it if he could. It resulted from the spirit of such leaders that their polities could not be reconciled. Luther, though he proceeded from a theoretical retention of the Mass (set forth in the conciliatory Augsburg Confession of 1530, drawn up by Melanchthon) to a bitter denunciation of it, always leant towards the Catholic doctrine of the eucharist in that he merely substituted the dogma of "consubstantiation" for "transubstantiation," and refused to go further. The Swiss Protestants took up another position. Their chief founder, Ulrich Zwingli, a more rational spirit than Luther, and brave enough to teach that good heathens might be saved, went boldly back to

the position of John Scotus, and taught that the bread and wine of the sacrament were merely memorial symbols. On this head, despite the efforts of Melanchthon, Luther refused all compromise, and denounced the Zwinglians with his usual violence. Calvin, whose power in Geneva was established in 1541, tempered their formula after Luther's death to the extent of affirming, in Lutheran language, that in the eucharist a certain divine influence was communicated to faithful participants. But even this could not secure the dogmatic agreement that the theological ideal demanded; and the followers of Luther soon gave the quarrel a quality of incurable bitterness. Even on the question of predestination the sects could not agree, though both Luther and Calvin, in their different terminologies, affirmed the foreordination of all things.

These were only the most comprehensive of a multitude of Protestant divisions. In the sixteenth century there are enumerated by ecclesiastical historians at least eighty Protestant sects, all named for certain special tenets, or after leaders who held themselves apart. The general resort to the Bible had thus revived the phenomena of the early ages of the faith; and each leading sect or church within its own sphere sought in the papal fashion to suppress variation. The result was a maximum of dogmatism and malice. Every sect split into many. Thus there were some thirteen groups of Anabaptists; over thirty separate confessions were drawn up among the main bodies; and Luther enumerated nine varieties of doctrine on the eucharist alone. The doctrine seldomest broached was that of mutual toleration. Between Lutherans and Calvinists the quarrel went

so far that when John Laski, the learned Polish Calvinist, was sailing from England to the continent on his expulsion with his adherents from England under Mary, he was refused leave to remain at the Lutheran ports of Elsinore, Hamburg, Lubeck, and Rostock. But as time went on the Lutherans were divided endlessly and irreconcilably on doctrinal issues among themselves. Melanchthon died declaring the gladness with which he passed away from a world filled with the monstrous hatreds of theologians; and after his day matters grew worse instead of better.

It was thus abundantly proved that the cult of the Bible gave no help towards peace and goodwill; and Catholicism naturally profited by the demonstration, many Protestants returning to its fold. In Germany such reversions were set up alike by the attitude of Luther towards the revolting peasants, many of whom in turn rejected his doctrine, and by the wild licence of the Anabaptists, whose madness could be traced to his impetus. Equally did Romanism gain from the admission that freedom of profession was found to give outlets for atheism; and from the open growth of Unitarianism which, taking rise in Italy in the Lutheran period, was thence carried to Switzerland and elsewhere, and made considerable headway in Poland. The younger Socinus (Sozzini), who joined and developed the movement, was not its founder even in Poland; but when modified and organised by him there it received his name. The Socinian cult terrified many Protestants, driving them back to the old ways; and it may have been partly the resentful fear of such effects that led Calvin to commit his historic crime of causing the Spaniard

Servetus to be burned at the stake (1553) for uttering Unitarian doctrine. But Calvin's language at every stage of the episode, his heartless account of the victim's sufferings, and his gross abuse of him afterwards, tell of the ordinary spirit of the bigot—incensed at opposition and exulting in vengeance.

Where a scholar could so sink, the bulk of the Protestant communities inevitably became fanatical and hard. In Holland, where Calvin's church became that of the republic, it treated Arminianism in the seventeenth century as itself had been treated by Lutheranism in the sixteenth. Arminius (Jacobus Harmensen) had sought in a halting fashion to modify the dogma of predestination, and to prove that all men might repent and be saved. Dying after much controversy (1609), he left a sect who went further than he; and the strife came to the verge of civil war, the Arminian Barneveldt being beheaded as a traitor (1619), and the illustrious Grotius sentenced to perpetual imprisonment, from which however he contrived to escape. In England in the next generation the Presbyterians, whose doctrine was Calvinistic, showed the same tyrannous temper; the Arminian archbishop Laud was no better; and in Calvinist Scotland and Lutheran Germany alike the common people were similarly intolerant. Standing with their leaders on the Bible as the beginning and end of truth, the Protestants everywhere assumed infallibility, and proceeded to decree pains and penalties with a quite papal inhumanity. Had Luther been able to give effect to his hatred of the Jews, they would have been persecuted as they never had been—apart from the chronic massacres—in the Catholic period. He would have left them neither synagogues nor homes,

neither books nor property. Thus taught, Protestants became persecutors in mass.

In particular, they everywhere turned with a new zest to the burning of witches, the old superstitions being frightfully reinforced by the newly current doctrine of the Pentateuch. No argument—though it was tried by some—could countervail the testimony of the Sacred Book against witchcraft, and its decree of the death penalty. As the frenzy of witch-burning was equally intense in the Catholic countries in the Lutheran period, the mania may be traced in the first instance to the Inquisition, which made a specialty of such action. But it is clear that the new study of the Bible in Protestant countries gave it as strong a stimulus. In England and Scotland, for instance, there had been very little witch-burning in the Catholic period; and the first English law for the purpose was passed under Henry VIII., in 1541; but in both countries the madness thenceforth went step for step with the growth of Puritanism; and the amount of insane cruelty caused by it is past human power to realise.

If the merits of Christianity as a civilising force are to be in any way determined by its influence in working bloodshed, its record in the matter of witch-slaying alone would serve to place it, in that regard, lower than any other creed. Classic paganism knew no such infamy. All the horrors which Christians are wont to cite as typically heathen, the legends of Juggernaut and the pictures of Dahomey, dwindle beside the dreadful sum of evil set forth in the past of their own faith. For the Protestant lands burned at least as many hapless women for the imaginary crime of witchcraft as the Inquisition burned men for

heresy. Most of the victims were women whose sole offence had been to have few friends. To be left a childless widow or an old maid was to run the risk of impeachment as a witch by any superstitious or malevolent neighbour; and the danger seems to have been actually doubled when such a woman gave herself to the work of rustic medicine-making in a spirit of goodwill to her kind. Lonely women who suffered in their minds from their very loneliness were almost sure to be condemned; and in cases where partial insanity did not lead them to admit the insane charges against them, torture easily attained the same end. But the mere repute for scientific studies could bring a man to his death; and in Scotland a physician was horribly tortured and at last burned on the charge of having raised the storm which endangered the life of King James on his return voyage from Denmark with his bride. The crowning touch of horror is the fact that in Protestant history for generations there is hardly a trace of popular compassion for the victims. In the north of Catholic Italy there was rebellion against witch-burning, perhaps because it was a part of the machinery of the Inquisition; in the Protestant countries there was nothing of the kind. Luther, a man normally fond of children, was capable of advising that a "possessed" child should be thrown into the river to drown or be cured. In Italy and France there had always been scepticism on the matter among educated men; in the Protestant world the new Bibliolatry made such scepticism go in fear of its life. Wherever t arose, piety met it with the consciousness of perfect wisdom, derived from revelation. Calvin was as confident on the subject as Luther; and when Doctor John Wier of Clèves, apparently a believer in

demons, whose numbers he afterwards statistically estimated at over seven thousand millions, ventured to argue in 1563 that many of the so-called witches were simply lunatics, he met as little favour in the Protestant as in the Catholic sphere. It is to be remembered, as a landmark in intellectual history, that the great French publicist Jean Bodin, the most original political thinker of his age, and far from orthodox on the Christian creed, was the foremost champion of the reigning superstition, which had become one of his rooted prejudices.

In England, in 1584, a notable book was written against it, the *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, by Reginald Scot; but still the mania deepened. King James I. caused Scot's book to be burned by the hangman in the next generation; and the superstition, thus accredited, reached its height in the period of the Commonwealth, whereafter it declined in the sceptical era of the Restoration. Nowhere did effective resistance arise on the religious plane. The reaction was conspicuously the work of the sceptics, noted as such. Montaigne began it in France, by the sheer force of his hardy and luminous common sense, which made no account of either the theology or the learning arrayed against it; and inasmuch as the most brutal fanaticism was in this matter everywhere bound up with the popular creed, the new enlightenment became in England anti-democratic because democracy there was the power of persecution, as in France it became anti-clerical. The Protestant movement had in its own despite set up a measure of mental freedom, by breaking up the ecclesiastical unity of Europe; but its spirit soon revealed to clear eyes that freedom of thought was not to be reached by mere reform of

the Church as such. It thus evolved a scepticism which struck at the roots of all Christian beliefs.

The intellectual fatality of the Reformation was that it set up against the principle of papal authority not that of private judgment but that of revelation, and thus still made ancient ignorance the arbiter in the deepest problems. It is indeed vain to say, with Erasmus and with Goethe, that Luther did ill to force a crisis, and that the reform of the Church should have been left to time and the process of culture. No culture could have reformed the papacy as an economic system: the struggle there was finally not between knowledge and ignorance but between vested interests and outsiders' rights. In the Rome of Leo X., as Ranke has calculated, there were twenty-five hundred venal offices, half of them created by Leo to raise funds for the building of St. Peter's; and probably most were held by cultured men. What they fought for was not dogma but revenue: Luther when among them had been scandalised by their irreligion, not by their superstition. Looking back, we may still say that a violent rupture was inevitable. Two generations later, we find Pope Sixtus V. (1585-90) raising money as did Leo X. by the sale of places, and putting the prices so high as to promote official corruption in an extreme degree.

Rome, as a city, lived on its ecclesiastical revenue, and the total vested interest was irreversible. During the long papal schism in which the main wealth of the Church went to the Popes of Avignon, Rome sank visibly to the level of "a town of cowherds," and the old church of St. Peter's was in danger of falling to pieces. From the middle of the fifteenth century to the end of the sixteenth, the Popes laboured successively

to make their city the most splendid in Europe; and only a great revenue, extorted by corrupt or corrupting methods, could maintain it. The great Council of Trent, begun in 1545 to reform and reorganise the Church, had accomplished at its close in 1563 only a few doctrinal, disciplinary, and hierarchical modifications; and its own history proved the impossibility of a vital reform from within. Twice suspended for long periods, on pretexts of the disturbed state of Europe, it revealed in its closing session the inability of the nations as such to agree on any curative policy. The emperor, Ferdinand I., called for many reforms in a Protestant direction, such as marriage of priests, schools for the poor, "the cup for the laity," and the reform of convents; and the French prelates supported him; but those of Spain violently resisted, though they agreed in wishing to restrict the Pope's power; while the Italians, the most numerous party, stood by the Pope in all things, denouncing all gainsayers. In the end, the diplomatic cardinal Morone arranged matters with the different courts; the bishops had for the most part to give way; and the powers of the Pope, which in 1545 the movers of the Council had been bent on curtailing, were established in nearly every particular, without any important change being made in the administrative system. The Council had indeed repudiated the Lutheran and Calvinist doctrines of predestination to sin and salvation; and on this head the Lutherans gradually came round to the Catholic view; but on the side of Church government the Reformation remained practically justified. Still, it is the historic fact that its first general result was intellectual retrogression. Save in England, where Elizabeth's

irreligious regimen gave scope for a literary and scientific renaissance while it humiliated religion and the Church, leaving the fanatical growth of Protestantism to come later, the Protestant atmosphere was everywhere one of theological passion and superstition, in which art and science and fine letters were blighted.

By reaction, some similar results accrued within the scope of Catholicism in France and Italy. It is significant that "the importance of the anatomical description of the heart by Vesalius was not thoroughly comprehended by investigators for seventy-three years (1543 to 1616); and the uses of the valves of the veins remained unknown for more than half a century." This was the period of the wars of religion in France, and of the theologians in Germany. Servetus had gone far on the way to the theory of the circulation of the blood in his *Christianismi Restitutio* (not in his work on the Trinity, as is often asserted), but the fact remained absolutely unknown in Switzerland and Germany. Scotland, which just before the Reformation had in the works of Dunbar and Lyndsay what might have been the beginning of a great literature, fell into a theological delirium which lasted two hundred years, and from which the nation emerged with its literary and intellectual continuity destroyed, and needing new tillage from foreign thought to yield any new life. It was only after the period of devout Protestantism had been succeeded by strife-weariness, toleration, and doubt, that Protestant Holland and Switzerland began to count for anything in science and scholarship; and Germany and Scandinavia had to wait still longer for a new birth.

Catholic France, with all her troubles, fared on the

whole better in the mental life. Rabelais was for his country a fountain of riotous wisdom all through the worst time of the civil wars; and before they had ended Montaigne began effectually the new enlightenment. Only in England, where Shakespeare and Bacon signalised Protestant rule, was there any similar good fortune; and both in England and France the period was one of extensive though necessarily cautious scepticism. Alongside of the first stirrings of Protestantism there had arisen in France a spirit of critical unbelief, represented by the *Cymbalum Mundi* of Bonaventure des Periers (1537), who had set out as a Protestant; and the ferocities of the war engendered in many a temper like his. What Montaigne did was to give to practical scepticism the warrant of literary genius, and to win for it free currency by the skill of his insinuation. Without such fortunate fathering, rationalism in England made much headway in the Elizabethan age. Shakespeare is subtly impregnated with its spirit; Bacon gave it a broad basis under cover of orthodoxy; and there were loud contemporary protests that atheism was on foot wherever continental culture came.

By such complainants the evil was early traced to Italy; and it is clear that there, after the Spanish conquest, men's energies turned from the closed field of politics to that of religion and philosophy, despite the Inquisition, very much as men in ancient Greece had turned to philosophy after the rise of the Macedonian tyranny. From Italy came alike Deism and Unitarianism, and such atheism as there was. The Inquisition still burned all heretics alike when it could catch them; but even among the clergy, nay, among the very inquisitors themselves, there were

many heretics; and the zealots had to call in lay bigots to help them. Heretical books were burned by the thousand, most being absolutely suppressed; and when there was established (about 1550) the famous *Index Expurgatorius*, in imitation of the example already set at Louvain and Paris, it was soon found that some works by cardinals, and by the framer of the first Italian list, had to be included. Protestantism was thus crushed out in Italy, with due bloodshed to boot; and the heretical Franciscans were forced in mass to recant; but in the end there was no gain to faith. Heresy became more elusive and more pervasive; and when in the year 1600 the Papacy put to death Giordano Bruno, his work as the herald of a new philosophy was already done. In the next generation appeared Galileo, the pioneer of a new era of practical science. Thus even in her time of downfall did Italy begin for Europe a second renascence.

Thenceforth, in the sphere of the Church of Rome, unbelief persisted either audaciously or secretly alongside of the faith. Within the Church, the long battle with Protestantism had evolved fresh energies of propaganda, and even a measure of ascetic reformation. In particular, the new Order of Jesuits (founded in 1534), which we have seen completing the recapture of Poland, strove everywhere by every available means, fair and foul, for the Church's supremacy. Where treachery and cruelty could not be used, as they were in Poland, the Jesuits made play with a system of education which realised the ideals of the time; and besides thus training the young as adherents, the Church developed within itself a revival of ecclesiastical learning that made a formidable resistance to the learning of French and English Protestantism.

In the latter half of the seventeenth century the combatants thus wrought by their literary warfare what they had previously done by their physical strife—a gain to the spirit of unbelief. Neither side convinced the other; and while the Protestants discredited many of the old Catholic beliefs, their opponents more subtly discredited the faculty of theological reason, putting all human judgments in doubt as such. The outcome was a strengthening of the anti-theological bias. Jesuit education, where it became at all scientific, armed the born sceptics; and where it was limited to *belles lettres* it failed in the long run to make either earnest believers or able disputants.

Thus the Reformation, in the act of giving Christianity a new intensity of life among certain populations, where it fostered and was fostered by a growth of intolerant democracy, unwittingly promoted at once fanaticism and freethinking both in its own and in its enemy's sphere. Deepened superstition forced a deepening of scepticism; fanaticism drove moderate men to science; and theological learning discredited theology. In papal and downtrodden Italy, in monarchic and military France, in the England of the Restoration, and in semi-democratic Holland, there worked in the seventeenth century the same divergent forces.

In both Holland and England, by help of the spirit of fanatical democracy, the multiplication of sects and heresies in the second generation of the seventeenth century was so great—180 being specified in England alone—that no repressive policy could deal with them; and under cover of their political freedom there arose Unitarian doctrine among the common people, even

as anti-Scriptural Deism spread among the educated. Devoutly religious men, such as George Fox, the founder of Quakerism, by the very thoroughness of their loyalty to the doctrine of the inward light, helped to shake among sincere people the old docility of belief in revelation, though in some cases they reinforced it, and in many more evoked, by reaction, the spirit of persecution.

The net gain from Protestantism thus lay in the disruption of centralised spiritual tyranny. The rents in the structure made openings for air and light at a time when new currents were beginning to blow and new light to shine. Twenty years before Luther's schism, Columbus had found the New World. Copernicus, dying in 1543, left his teaching to the world in which Protestantism had just established itself. Early in the next century Kepler and Galileo began to roll back for men the old dream-boundaries of the universe. The modern era was in full progression; and with it Christianity had begun its era of slow decline.

CHAPTER II.

PROGRESS OF ANTI-CHRISTIAN THOUGHT.

§ 1. *The Physical Sciences.*

It was primarily the growth of physical science, from the middle of the sixteenth century, that gave solidity and permanence to the new movements of rationalistic revolt aroused by the spectacle of the Reformation and the strifes it engendered. That spectacle, and in general the wars of religion which followed, tended more to make scoffers or sceptics than to develop constructive rationalism. One of the conclusions forced on statesmanlike minds by the religious wars in France was that "a peace with two religions was better than a war with none"; and the seventeenth century there began with a strong though secretive tendency among the idle classes to what in the next century became universally known as the Voltairean temper. In the seventeenth, however, it was denied the use of printing; and under this disadvantage it must have fared ill were it not for the new studies which at once developed and buttressed the spirit of inquiry. They built up a new habit of mind, the surest obstacle to dogma.

Were men wont to develop their beliefs logically, the teaching of Copernicus alone, when once accepted, would have broken up the orthodox faith, which at nearly every point implied the geocentric theory.

Giordano Bruno, recognising this, wove on the one hand the Copernican principle into his restatement of the ancient doctrine of the infinity of the universe, and on the other hand derided alike Catholicism and Protestantism. But a comprehensive philosophy is not the kind of propaganda that first "comes home to men's business and bosoms": the line of practical disturbance lay through exact science; and it is in the practical and experimental work of Galileo that Copernicanism begins (1616–1638) to stir the educated intelligence of Europe. Bacon and Bodin, like Luther, had rejected it as theoretically propounded. It was the telescopic discoveries of Galileo that staggered the sceptics and alarmed the church.

The need for a solid discipline as a grounding for rationalism is made clear by the aberrations of many of the earlier religious doubters. Bodin, as we have seen, held fanatically by witchcraft; and he likewise accepted astrology, as did many half-developed Italian freethinkers who rejected the ideas of demons and sorcery, and doubted much concerning the Bible. Men reasoned on such matters by the light of their training, of what seemed to be probability, and of scanty evidence, in matters where, as in astrology, hypotheses could be properly checked only by minute and patient scrutiny. Thus the disbelievers in astrology were as a rule bigoted Christians who, like Luther, merely rejected it as unscriptural, while Melanchthon leant to the belief. It has been said with broad truth that whereas Greece, with her dialectic discipline, exhorted men to make their beliefs agree with one another, and the Christian Church ordered them to make their beliefs agree with her dogma, the modern spirit demands that beliefs should agree with facts.

Such a spirit first promoted and then was immensely promoted by the study of natural science. Even in the Middle Ages, as in antiquity, physicians were proverbially given to irreligion; and the study of physics was still more conducive to religious doubt than that of physic.

In England the naturalistic spirit, as we may term it, was notably popularised by Bacon, but the effectual growth of Protestant fanaticism began in his day, and had to run its course before much energy was available for scientific research; though both Gilbert the electrician and Harvey the discoverer of the circulation of the blood belonged to Bacon's generation. But even before the Restoration, educated Englishmen were weary enough of strife to begin the gatherings which afterwards became the Royal Society, devoted strictly to scientific enquiry, with a positive veto on all theological discussion.

To their scientific studies they had a powerful lead from France, where Descartes had virtually begun a new era in philosophy by his *Discourse on Method* (1637), a work which professed allegiance to the Church but reversed all the Church's methods; and where Gassendi, a truer physicist than Descartes, controverted the spiritualistic positions of the latter in a singularly modern spirit of rationalism. By this time, too, had begun to appear the impotence of the Church against the ubiquitousness of modern heresy. She contrived to strike where she should have spared, and to spare where she ought in consistency to have struck. Galileo was probably, as he professed to be, an orthodox Catholic in his main theological beliefs, yet he was persecuted by the Inquisition; and though the story of his "still it

moves" is a fable, he was forced to recant under threat of torture. Descartes, who protested his loyalty to the Church, was at least a new support to theism; but because his teachings were adopted in France by the Jansenists, the quasi-Protestant enemies of the Jesuits, they were ecclesiastically prohibited, and his supporters in the church and the university were persecuted; while the prudent Gassendi, who at times reasons like an atheist, contrived without protestation to keep on good terms with the Church, of which he was actually a Canon. He had taken orders solely for the sake of an income; and he was never disturbed, though he wrote a vindication of Epicurus, one of the most nearly atheistical of the Greek philosophers.

Nowhere is the new impulse to science more clearly seen than in papal and Spanish-ruled Italy. There, as Bacon complained was the case nearly everywhere throughout Europe, most scientific professors were poorly paid, while the learned professions were well endowed; yet at the close of the sixteenth century there did not exist a single distinguished Greek scholar in the peninsula; and while this may have been due to papal policy, the unfostered study of the natural sciences went forward on all hands. Narrowly watched by the Church, the students nevertheless propagated new science throughout north-western Europe. Unhappily, as we have seen, the theological spirit still hampered its evolution, but the study persisted.

From the middle of the seventeenth century onwards it is clear that physical science by its very method and character undermined theology. Here there were possible rational proof and intelligent agreement, instead of the eternal sterility of theological debate on

irrational propositions. In France, Holland, and England, the followers of Descartes, even when agreeing on a fundamentally wrong theory of cosmic physics, made for rationalism by their discipline as well as by what was accurate in their detailed science; the influence of the English Royal Society was recognisably anti-clerical; and from Gassendi onwards the whole scientific movement told decisively against superstition, so that the belief in witchcraft was discredited within a generation from the time of its worst intensity. Glanvil, who professed a scientific scepticism, on Cartesian lines, defended the superstition as Bodin had done, and was supported not only by the theologians but by such a pious man of science as the chemist Boyle, who was equally sceptical in his own proper sphere; yet they could not restore credulity. More august beliefs were shaken in turn. Boyle in his latter years set himself anxiously to defend Christianity; and Newton was moved to exert himself even in the cause of theism, which was newly challenged. But Newton himself was a Unitarian; his distinguished contemporary the astronomer Halley was reputed a thorough unbeliever; and Newton's own philosophy, which proceeded on Gassendi as well as on the devout Kepler, was denounced by some, including the German Leibnitz, as tending to atheism. Leibnitz in turn stood wearily aloof from the church in his own country. No personal bias or prejudice could cancel the fundamental dissidence between exact science and "revealed" dogma.

While the literary movement of English Deism in the eighteenth century was not ostensibly grounded on physical philosophy, being rather critical and logical, it always kept the new science in view; and

the movement in France, as set up by the young Voltaire, connected itself from the first with the Newtonian philosophy, which there had to drive out the Cartesian, now become orthodox. In the hands of La Mettrie, biological science pointed to even deeper heresy ; and, for such propagandists as Diderot and D'Holbach, all science was an inspiration to a general rejection of religion. Even the pursuit of mathematics developed pronounced unbelievers, such as D'Alembert and Condorcet. When, finally, in the closing years of the century the scientific spirit flagged or stagnated in England, first by reason of the new growths of industry and the new imperial expansion, later by reason of reaction against the French Revolution, it was the French men of science, in particular the astronomers and mathematicians, as Laplace, Lagrange, Lalande, and Delambre, who carried on the profession of rationalism. In particular, Laplace's great contribution, the nebular hypothesis, clinched on non-theistic grounds the whole development of modern astronomy; and the philosopher Kant, who on that point had in a measure anticipated him, never adopted the semblance of Christian orthodoxy even while seeking to conserve theism.

All the later generalisations of science have told in the same way; and all have had to struggle for life against the instinctive hostility of the Christian Churches, Protestant and Catholic alike. Geology, after a generation of outcry, made an end of the orthodox theory of cosmic creation; the evolution theory drove home the negation with a new constructive doctrine; and Darwinism, after a no less desperate contest, has upturned the very foundations of Christian ethics as well as dogma. It does not countervail this

essential tendency that a number of men of science in each generation profess to adhere to Christianity. The adherence is seldom thorough, and when it is, it is commonly recognised to stand for lack of culture on the historical and ethical sides of the issue. The result is that Protestant Christianity nearly everywhere capitulates outwardly to natural science, professing still to save its own more essential dogmas; while Catholicism forces upon its adherents either "scientific nescience" or a dissimulation fatal to zeal.

§ 2. *Philosophy, Cosmic and Moral.*

It lies on the face of our sketch of the movement of physical science that it is subversive of Christian orthodoxy, though not of extra-Christian theism. But since Giordano Bruno all cosmic philosophy has pointed to pantheism; and all moral philosophy since Descartes has been more or less fatally subversive of Christian dogma. In the great work of Spinoza (1671), who partly proceeded on Descartes and partly transcended him, we have a philosophy and an ethic that are reluctantly pronounced by respectful theists to be virtually atheistic; and no great philosophy since has reversed that impetus.

Moral philosophy had begun to be non-theological in Montaigne's day; and his disciple, Charron, constructed in his *Wisdom* what is pronounced to be the first modern treatise on that footing. Less than a century later the English Cumberland, although a bishop of the Church, took a similarly rationalistic course in morals in his reply to Hobbes (1672), making no appeal to revelation, though of course

making no attack on it; and the undisguised naturalism of Hobbes was thus tacitly countenanced in fundamentals from the clerical side, in the very act of repudiation. Shaftesbury, who became the most influential moralist of the first half of the eighteenth century, did but develop the naturalistic principle on avowedly theistic and non-Christian lines. Bishop Berkeley, who assailed both Spinoza and Shaftesbury, could justify his Christian beliefs only by arguing that sceptics themselves, in the study of mathematics, accepted many arbitrary propositions, and might as well accept the mystery of Jesus Christ. Even Locke, though he stood for a "reasonable" and non-dogmatic Christianity, was in effect an influence for deism in respect of his philosophy.

All later moral philosophy of any standing has been either plainly non-evangelical or essentially irreconcilable with the Christian faith. Even the argumentation of Bishop Butler (1736) has no more validity for it than for any other, and is finally as favourable to atheism as to theism. Hume, who developed from deism into a final agnosticism, was at all stages anti-Christian in his ethic as well as in his metaphysic and his historical criticism of religion; and Adam Smith was strictly deistic. The later and deeper German philosophies of Kant and Fichte are no more helpful to Christianity, though elaborate attempts have been made to adapt Kantism to its service; and though Hegel finally proposed to rehabilitate its dogmas, his German disciples for the most part became anti-Christian; one of them, Feuerbach, becoming one of the most formidable critics of the faith. The professionally Christian moral philosophies, such as that of Paley in England, have been abandoned by the

sincerely religious no less than by the students of philosophy. Coleridge, seeking to give a philosophic aspect to the faith of his latter years, had to fall back on the "modal" Trinity, and could make no judicial defence of the doctrines of salvation and damnation.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, finally, the balance of philosophic thought has been overwhelmingly hostile to Christian beliefs. Everywhere, whether it be professedly utilitarian or "transcendental," it is essentially monistic and evolutionist; and while the expressly naturalistic doctrine, typified in the teaching of Spencer, positively rejects all pretence of revelation, the spiritistic schools do nothing for historic religion beyond claiming to have reinstated a theism which is not "providential," and so amounts in practice to pantheism. The so-called materialism of Germany, represented by the writings of Moleschott and Büchner, though constantly assailed on metaphysical grounds, is the common-sense conviction of millions of educated men; and the metaphysical attack makes scarcely a pretence of claiming belief for conventional religion. Christianity thus subsists without anything that can properly be described as philosophic support, save as regards some Catholic systems which rationalists or men of science rarely take the trouble to examine.

§ 3. *Biblical and Historical Criticism.*

Most men, probably, accept or reject religious creeds on the strength not of any systematically philosophic reasoning but of either emotional bias or common-sense examination of concrete evidence. Thus

the main instruments in turning men from Christian credences have been the documentary and historical forms of criticism.

Such criticism, secretly frequent among educated men in the sixteenth century, never ventured into print till the seventeenth, and even then did so very circumspectly. English Deism begins its literary existence with Lord Herbert of Cherbury, whose first work, produced under French influences, appeared in Latin in 1624. His position was that the doctrine of forgiveness for faith is immoral; that all pretences of revelation are repugnant to moral reason; and that as all so-called revelations are sectarian and mutually exclusive, human reason must proceed for itself on a basis of natural theism. Such audacity was possible in virtue partly of the resort to Latin, partly of the high personal standing of the writer. The next outstanding anti-Christian work is the *Leviathan* (1651) of Hobbes, who ventured to publish in English under the doctrinally tolerant rule of Cromwell. In his treatise, not only is the attitude of faith constantly disparaged, but there is made a beginning of criticism of the inconsistencies of the Pentateuch. Such criticism seems to have gone much further in private discussion long before that time; and it is clear from many apologetic treatises that doctrinal unbelief was abundant; but the publication of a sceptical work that could be read by the unlearned marks an era of germinating unbelief. Spinoza's *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (1670) carries the principle of rational textual criticism of the Bible further; and after the French Catholic professor Richard Simon had published in French his critical treatises on the texts of the Old and New Testaments (1678 and 1689), though these were

professedly orthodox, Biblical criticism began a new life.

The first drastic attacks of a businesslike kind on orthodoxy were those of the English Deists of the early years of the eighteenth century, typified in the works of Anthony Collins, who soberly and amiably called in question alike revelation, prophecy, and miracles. Soon such criticism was reinforced by the enquiry of Middleton into Roman Catholic miracles, on lines which implicitly called in question those of the gospels; and the essay of Hume on miracles in general put the case against them on grounds which could be turned only by arguments that evaded them. The polemic of the whole French school of Freethinkers, headed by Voltaire, thereafter attacked every aspect of Jewish and Christian supernaturalism and of Jewish and Christian history considered as a moral dispensation; the English Unitarians, represented by Priestley, made a number of converts to their compromise; and when Gibbon came to deal with the rise of Christianity in his great work (1776–88), he set forth on naturalistic grounds a tentative sociological explanation which could not be overthrown by orthodox methods, and is to be superseded only by a more searching analysis on the same lines. So decisive was the total effect of the critical attack that in the last quarter of the century many German theologians within the Church had begun to deal with the supernatural elements in the Old Testament on rationalistic though temporising methods, and some had even begun to apply the same treatment to the New. Finally came, in England, the powerful common-sense attack of Thomas Paine (1793), which at once set up a movement of popular rationalism that has never since ceased.

To all such rationalism, however, a strong check was set up for a whole generation, especially in England, by the universal reaction against the French Revolution. Hitherto the upper classes, there as in France, had been noted mainly for unbelief in religious matters; but when it was seen from the course of the Revolution that heterodoxy could join hands with democracy, there was a rapid change of front, on the simple ground of class interest. During the first generation of the nineteenth century, accordingly, all English freethinking was driven under the social surface, and classed as disreputable, so that it was possible to assume a great revival of faith. In France, similarly, the literary pietism of Chateaubriand seemed to have crowned with success the official restoration of the Church's authority; and even the intellectual revival was associated with Christian zeal on the part of such energetic personalities as Guizot. Even in Germany, though there the work of Biblical criticism on rationalist lines went steadily on, there was a pietist revival. Before the middle of the century was reached, however, it was clear that in France and Germany rationalism was in full renascence; and in England, where such facts are less readily avowed, scholarly writings even in the fourth decade had begun to prove the solidarity of European culture.

As regards Biblical criticism, there appears to be a certain periodicity of action. In the eighteenth century, when the work done was mainly of the common-sense order, the French physician Jean Astruc laid down a basis for exact documentary analysis by pointing to the two elements of Yahwist (Jehovist) and Elohist narrative as indicating two distinct sources.

On such lines the earlier German scholars of the nineteenth century long laboured, till the common-sense criticism was lost sight of. In the meantime, however, a long line of partially rationalist criticism of the New Testament culminated in the *Life of Jesus* by Strauss; and educated Christendom was shaken to its foundations, insofar as it ventured to read. Side by side with that of Strauss, there proceeded in Germany a great movement of documentary and historical analysis, till professional theology there became almost identified with the surrender of Christian supernaturalism.

As the critical movement proceeded in England, it came about that an admired dignitary of its Church, Bishop Colenso, was convinced on common-sense lines of the utterly unhistorical character of the main Pentateuchal narrative, and courageously published his views (1862). From that point the European criticism of the Old Testament, which had been proceeding on the assumption of the genuineness of the narrative, took a new course with such rapid success that within a generation the whole mass of the Old Testament had been either decisively or provisionally reduced, chiefly by Dutch and German scholars, to a variety of sources never wholly in accordance with the traditional ascription, and representing collectively a vast historical process of fabrication. In the face of the facts, the claim of "inspiration" still made for the books, by some of the scholars who expound the process of their composition, is naturally treated with indifference by educated men not professionally committed to such a position.

With whatever bias the problem be approached, all really critical study of the documents latterly tells

against the Christian position. Writers who, like Renan, have treated Christian origins in a spirit of literary sympathy with that of belief, none the less undo faith, and offer at best a sentimental historical construction in place of the destroyed tradition. The orthodox defence, on the other hand, grows rapidly less confident in the hands of scholarly men. The latest development of professional study, as set forth in the English *Encyclopædia Biblica*, shows a progressive collapse of the traditional belief on almost every detail, some continental theologians now going further in their rejection of it than many professed rationalists.

CHAPTER III.

POPULAR ACCEPTANCE.

§ 1. *Catholic Christianity.*

ALL through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and till near the end of the nineteenth, the masses of Europe remained attached to their respective churches in despite of the play of criticism among the more instructed. Whether popular religion be regarded as a matter of habit and superstition or as the expression of a higher happiness in religious rites, it has unquestionably numbered the great majority down till recent times. How the Catholic Church recovered large parts of Germany, practically all Poland and Bohemia, and for a time the complete control of France, we have seen. Within her sphere, popular conduct was certainly no worse than in the age of her undivided power; and where she could number within her fold minds like Paolo Sarpi, the historian of the Council of Trent, in the sixteenth century; like Pascal and Fénelon and Bossuet in the seventeenth; and like Vico in the eighteenth, though in hardly any case are such leading spirits found to be in thorough harmony with the papal system, she could not but hold the respect of a great body even of educated people.

Her swarms of missionaries, too, seemed for a time to have begun a new era of Catholic expansion in Asia and America, finding footing in the sixteenth and

seventeenth centuries in Japan, China, India, Siam, Tonkin, as well as in North and South America. Sent forth by the College of Propaganda (*Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*) founded in 1622, they displayed a zeal never surpassed in the Church's history. In Japan and China, in particular, they had for a time a dazzling success, largely through the address of the Jesuits—whose policy was to win converts by identifying native rites and beliefs with Christian, never openly assailing but always seeking to assimilate them. As early as 1549, Francis Xavier had preached the faith in Japan, and at the beginning of the seventeenth century it seemed likely to become the religion of the State. But Christians undid the Christian cause. Between the various orders of Catholic missionaries there were always deadly jealousies, all the others denouncing the Jesuits, who in turn charged incompetence and malevolence on all; and the visible prosperity of the propagandists in Japan gave colour to the hints of the Protestant traders, Dutch and English, that Catholic missions were a prelude to Catholic conquest. The Japanese emperor, accordingly, began a great persecution in 1587, and during a number of years the Christian converts were slaughtered by tens of thousands. Still the Jesuits persevered; but in the next generation persecution began afresh. At length, in 1637, by a supreme effort, the weakened Catholic flock were wholly destroyed or expelled. Once more it had been demonstrated that really determined and rigorous persecution by a majority in power can eradicate the Christian or any other religion in a given sphere.

In Siam in the next century a slight success was similarly followed by expulsion; and in China, where

an outward success had been won as a sequel to the expansion in Japan, and where the Christian cause subsisted longer, despite some persecution and despite the fierce dissensions of the different orders on points both of doctrine and corporate conduct, it dwindled in the eighteenth century. The success, indeed, had been all along illusory, as the Chinese had adapted rather than adopted Christian forms, and merely carried on their usual rites under Christian auspices. When, accordingly, the rival orders at length forced on the papacy, in the teeth of the Jesuits, a decision as to whether Chinese Christians should or should not truly conform to Christian doctrine, and a decision against the Jesuits was given, the semblance of conversion melted away, and a reversion to Jesuit methods could not restore it. A similar decision made an end of a rather flourishing movement of Jesuit Brahmanism in India about the middle of the eighteenth century; and the other labours of the Catholic missionaries in India were undone by the cruelties of their own Inquisition.

Jesuitism had by this time been convicted of aiming in the old fashion at its own worldly wealth, of troubling by its political plottings the peace of every country it could enter, and of setting up its own ambitions against the papal authority. In the East it had become a great wealth-hunting corporation; in South America it was the same, contriving for some generations to govern Paraguay in particular wholly for its own enrichment; in Europe it provoked every Catholic government in turn by its audacious attempts to control them. Thus it was expelled from Portugal in 1759, from France in 1762, from Bohemia in 1766; from Spain, Genoa, and Venice in 1767; and from

Naples, Malta, and Parma in 1768. At length, in 1773, the Society was suppressed by a papal bull, and though it was revived in the nineteenth century it has never since been the power it was, whether for evil or for good.

Of her extensions beyond Europe there thus remained substantially to the Church of Rome at the end of the eighteenth century only the Catholic populations of Central and South America and Canada; and at the outbreak of the French Revolution, marked as it was by the wholesale abjurations of Catholic priests and populace, it might have seemed as if the reign of Rome in Europe were coming to an end. The political movement, however, had outrun the educational; and as we have seen, there was even a literary reaction at the Restoration. In Italy, where the revolutionary movement had been hostile to the Church, the reaction after 1815 was very marked. All criticism of Catholicism was made a penal offence, and in the Kingdom of Naples alone, in 1825, there were twenty-seven thousand priests, eight thousand nuns, as many monks, twenty archbishops, and seventy-three bishops. In Spain and France, too, the clergy worked hard to recover authority over the people; and in Catholic Ireland they had never lost it, despite all the efforts of Protestantism.

Everywhere, however, save in America, the struggle for existence has gone against Catholicism in the nineteenth century. Catholic Ireland has been in large measure depopulated through the failure of Protestant England to solve its economic problems; and though this means a gain to Romanism in the United States, there is no great likelihood that that is permanent, or that Catholicism there will ever be very

docile to the papacy. France has become gradually more rationalistic, so much so that the municipal government of Paris is usually in the hands of free-thinkers; and the recent expulsion of the recalcitrant religious orders has proved the determination of the republican majority to put down clerical influence. The movement of anti-theological Positivism, founded by the teaching of Auguste Comte (d. 1857) on bases laid by Saint-Simon, has never been numerically strong, but has affected all French thought; and to-day there is scarcely one eminent French writer who professes religious opinions. Even in Spain, so long the stronghold of the faith, and still more generally in Italy, educated men are as a rule either indifferent or hostile to the Church; and the common people, especially the Socialists in the towns, have gone the same way. Both in Spain and Portugal, there are journals zealously devoted to a propaganda of free-thought. National union in Italy, accomplished in the middle of the century, has been fatal to ecclesiastical supremacy. The Papacy is unable to recover its temporal power at Rome; and its impotent complaints have ceased to be dignified. In Catholic Belgium, the action of the clergy is constantly fought by a ubiquitous freethought propaganda; and Dutch Catholicism does not gain ground.

Some appearance of Catholic revival occurred in England in the second and third generations of the nineteenth century, the "Oxford movement" preparing the ground; but though John Henry Newman was followed into the Catholic Church by a number of clergymen and rich laymen, the movement soon ceased to be intellectually important, and the popular success seems to have reached its limits. Though there is

much leaning to Rome in the High Church section of the heterogeneous Anglican body, it is certain that while the economic basis remains Protestant there will be no great secession. Economic considerations, again, have latterly set up even in Catholic Austria—which with Southern Germany is perhaps the most believing section of the Catholic world—a movement with the watchword "Loose from Rome." In Brazil, finally, there has been a quite extraordinary development of Positivism among the educated class; and the revolution which peacefully expelled the last emperor—himself personally estimable, and not an orthodox Catholic—was ostensibly wrought by the Positivist party.

Thus the generation which saw the promulgation of the formal decree of Papal Infallibility (1870) has seen the most vital decline that has ever taken place in the total life and power of the Church of Rome. It preserves its full hold to-day only on (1) the most ignorant or most rural sections of the population of Catholic countries, (2) the unintellectual sections of their middle and upper classes, and (3) the emotionally religious or pietistic types, who are still, by reason of the total circumstances, more numerous among women than among men. Hence in the Catholic countries, female education being there specially backward, the church depends relatively even more on women than do the churches of the Protestant countries. But among women in the Catholic countries also there goes on a process of rationalisation, Socialism doing some of the work of education where the other machinery is inadequate.

§ 2. *Protestant Christianity.*

The failure of Protestantism to gain any ground in Europe after the sixteenth century had naturally the effect of increasing the zeal of its adherents within their own sphere; and though nowhere did Protestant organisation compare in energy with that shown by the Society of Jesus and the Roman College of Propaganda, the system of popular education in several countries—as Switzerland, Scotland, and parts of Germany—was raised much above the popular Catholic level. Presbyterians in particular felt the need of popular schools for the maintenance of their polity. The result was, after a time, a certain improvement in the capacity and conditions of the common people where other causes did not interfere. Thus the Protestant cantons of Switzerland have in general been noted for greater material prosperity than the Catholic; and in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Presbyterian Scotland, though naturally much the poorer country, admittedly turned out a larger proportion of men qualified for responsible positions than did episcopalian England.

All the while, the influence of a Presbyterian clergy, in touch with the people and able to ostracise socially those who avowed unbelief, maintained in the Calvinistic countries a higher average of orthodoxy, the normal effect of higher education being thus checked on the side of religion. Scotland contributed little to the earlier deistic movement of the eighteenth century, Smith and Hume having taken it up after it had flourished for a generation in England; and at no time was rationalism socially avowed to the same

extent in the north as in the south, the enlightenment of the lay authors being confined to a small town circle.

On the moral and æsthetic side, however, popular Presbyterianism tended to be hard and joyless, with the natural result, seen alike in Geneva and in Scotland, of breeding much licence. On the other hand there arose a higher reaction, towards intellectual interests; and the Switzerland of the eighteenth century produced a remarkably large proportion of scientific men; while in Scotland, where centuries of theological life and strife set up even in the Church a notable spirit of "moderation," both the physical and the moral or social sciences were conspicuously cultivated. Popular freethinking was beginning to follow in both cases, when the reaction against the French Revolution arose to arrest it. When in the next generation there began in Scotland the ecclesiastical struggle which ended in the formation of the Free Church (1842) a new impulse was given to doctrinal fanaticism, which the competition of three rival Presbyterian churches was well fitted to maintain.

Thus, though Scottish scholars have contributed largely to the "higher criticism," the middle and working classes of Scotland all through the nineteenth century have been at least outwardly more orthodox than even those of England. They, too, however, have begun to exhibit the common critical tendencies. As the results of Biblical criticism become more generally known, church attendance tends to fall off, despite the economic pressure churchmen are able to use in small communities. It is perhaps as much on account of the common need as by reason of the growth of liberality that the two chief dissenting Scottish Churches, the

Free and the United Presbyterian (Voluntary), have recently amalgamated. Were it not that a large proportion of the more energetic and stirring youth of the country leave it for England and the colonies, the more conservative staying, the process of change would probably be more rapid.

In the small communities of Protestant Switzerland, a democratic church polity has equally served to maintain a greater stress of orthodox belief and practice than is seen in surrounding countries; and the appointment of Strauss to a chair of theology at Zurich by a Radical Government in 1839 led to an actual insurrection, set up and led by fanatical clergymen. Catholic cantons later showed themselves no less medieval. Nothing, however, avails to shut out critical thought; Zeller received a chair at Berne in 1847; rationalism has ever since steadily progressed; the number of theological students as steadily falls off; and among the Swiss theologians of to-day are some of the most "subversive" of the professional writers on Christian origins. Popular rationalism necessarily begins to follow, though less rapidly than in countries where the people and the clergy do not ecclesiastically govern themselves.

In Protestant Holland and the Scandinavian States, of late years, the decline of Christian faith has been still more marked. All are considerably influenced by German culture; and in Protestant Germany orthodoxy is gradually disappearing. There the long depression of civilisation begun by the troubles of the Reformation, and clinched by the vast calamity of the Thirty Years War, was favourable to a sombre religious feeling; and this actually prevailed in the latter part of the seventeenth century, triumphing

over a movement of spontaneous freethinking. Peace and the development of universities thereafter built up a learned class, who especially cultivated ecclesiastical history; and as we have seen, German theology had become in the primary sense rationalistic by the end of the eighteenth century. After the fall of Napoleon there began in earnest the education of the Prussian common people; and though to this day the learned class are more apart from the general public in Germany than in most other countries, the latter half of the nineteenth century has seen a great development of popular secularism.

In 1881, the church accommodation in Berlin sufficed for only 2 per cent. of the population, and even that was not at all fully used. This is the social aspect of Protestant Germany; and it effectively confutes the periodic statements as to revivals of orthodoxy in the universities. Such revivals are officially engineered and financially stimulated: the mass of the people of Protestant Germany, at least in the towns, have practically given up the Christian creed, even when they do not renounce their nominal membership in the State church; and the great Socialistic party, which contains over two millions of adult males, is pronouncedly rationalistic. In Scandinavia, the literary influence of such masters of drama and fiction as Ibsen and Björnson creates a freethinking spirit on a very wide scale among the middle classes, though the clergy are illiberal; and in Holland, where the churches are increasingly latitudinarian, there is a more competent journalistic propaganda of rationalism than in perhaps any other country.

That the same general movement of things goes on in England may be proved by reference to the almost

daily complaints of the clergy. Rationalism and secularism have advanced in all classes during half a century, until their propaganda is accepted as a quite normal activity; such writers as Spencer, Darwin, Huxley, and Clifford being read by the more studious of all ranks. Churchgoing constantly declines in the towns; agnosticism becomes more and more common among the educated classes; the average of the workers in the large towns are fixedly alienated from the Church; and the latter-day propaganda of the Salvation Army affects only the less intelligent types even since, after refusing for twenty years to deal with material problems, it has sought to establish itself as a charitable organisation for dealing with the "lapsed masses." As regards the general influence of the churches it is observable that whereas fifty years ago there were many clergymen and prelates noted as important writers on non-theological matters, and whereas even a few years ago there were still several bishops distinguished as scholars and historians, there are now none so describable. So, in the department of fine letters, there is scarcely a poet or novelist of high standing who can be called a believing Christian. In the last generation some distinguished men who were openly heterodox, as the late Mr. Matthew Arnold, or very dubiously orthodox, as Mr. Lecky, were wont to profess themselves good members of the Church of England; but the normal tendency of rationalists is now to give the churches up. The leading names in serious and even imaginative literature, with a few exceptions which stand for popularity rather than weight, are those of known unbelievers.

Of the state of thought in the United States it is

difficult to speak with precision. The latitude allowed to or taken by the majority of the clergy keeps within the ostensible pale of the numerous churches much opinion that elsewhere would rank as extremely heterodox; and it is from American churchmen that there has come the project of the so-called "Rainbow Bible," in which the heterogeneous sources of the Old Testament books are indicated by printing in variously coloured inks. As in all countries where the clergy are democratically in touch with the people, the breach between authority and modern thought is thus less marked than in the sphere of the Catholic and Anglican churches. But in such a civilisation, development is inevitably continuous.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the prevailing creed of New England, then noted for "plain living and high thinking," was Unitarianism. This seems to have grown rapidly after the Revolution, partly from seed sown by Priestley, who made New England his home, partly from the Deism of the educated class. Nearly all the leaders of the Revolution — Washington, Paine, Franklin, Jefferson, Adams—had been Deists. But Deism is an inconvenient creed for public men in a church-going or clerically-influenced world; and Unitarianism, with its decorous worship and use of the Bible, was a convenient compromise. Later "transcendental" teaching, such as the movement around Emerson, led men in the same direction. Latterly, however, the Unitarian congregations relatively dwindle; and while some of the defection stands for the relapse of the children from the strenuous thought of their fathers, some stands for complete abandonment of the habit of worship.

At the same time, popular rationalism has been greatly diffused in the United States by the lecturing of the late Colonel Ingersoll, one of the greatest orators of his time, as was his contemporary Charles Bradlaugh in England. Each of those men probably convinced more of his fellow countrymen of the untruth of the Christian creed than were ever rationally persuaded of its truth by any preacher or teacher of modern times. What preserves the form of faith in the States is probably less the socio-economic pressure seen so commonly in England and Scotland (since all life is franker and freer in the New World, especially in the West) than the simple lack of leisure for study in a community where competition for income drives all men at a pace that almost seems to belie prosperity. A shrewd and pliable clergy keeps itself rather better abreast of new scholarship and criticism than does the mass of the flock; and men and women who first learn from the pulpit something of the change of view passing over Biblical study are not apt to turn away from the teacher as Europeans do from an unteachable priest. But despite all accommodation the sense of an absolute change is diffused, and there is record of western preachers bidding farewell to the pulpit and being chorussed by laymen forsaking the pew.

In strict keeping with the shrinkage of faith among the "higher" races is the expenditure of effort to spread it among the "lower." Faith naturally seeks the comfort of converts at lower intellectual levels; and it is in some quarters able to report a certain expansion of territory by such means. But the total statistics of Protestant missions tell only of handfuls of converts scattered among the yellow and brown

and black races, a number grotesquely disproportionate to the immense outlay. This goes on in virtue of the still sufficient wealth of the churches, which are in consistency bound to respond to missionary appeals while they profess belief in the Christian doctrine of salvation. It is found, however, that the missionary system needs, to maintain it, either an ever more substantial stipend or some other opportunity of gain to the individual missionary; and the triviality of the results becomes increasingly discouraging to all save the most fervent faith. Disparagement of missionary labours on both moral and political grounds is probably more common among professed churchmen than among unbelievers, who sometimes, as in the case of Darwin, bear cordial testimony to the merits and the success of some missionaries as against the egoism of the normal trader in his relations with the undeveloped races.

The final problem of Protestantism is its collective relation to Catholicism; and in the first half of the nineteenth century many Protestants still hoped to gain ground at the expense of the Church of Rome, now that propaganda was free. No such success, however, has taken place. It is found on the contrary that the devotional types tend to revert from Protestantism to Rome, while those who reject Catholicism rarely become Protestants. In France this is peculiarly apparent. At the Revolution, it was found that proportionally as many Protestant pastors as Catholic priests were ready to abjure their creed. In the religious reaction both churches alike regained ground; and the Protestant Church in France has always had adherents distinguished for learning and moral earnestness. To-day, however, though its

members are relatively numerous in places of political power, by reason doubtless of their serious and practical education, their Church does not make any corresponding gains. Its numbers dwindle as steadily as those of the Catholic mass; and there is no prospect that it will recover strength through Catholic defections. In Austria, the anti-Roman movement already mentioned may conceivably give rise to a non-Romish Church; but it is impossible to forecast the issue.

§ 8. *Greek Christianity.*

It is the pride of the Greek Church to call itself Orthodox; and in no part of Christendom has the faith had less to fear from unbelief. Mere sectarian strife, indeed, has never been lacking; and at the very moment of the fall of Constantinople there was deadly schism between the orthodox and those who were politically willing to unite with the Latin Church. But vital heresy never throve. Political vicissitude in the Eastern empire, from Constantine onwards, seems always to have thrown the balance of force on the side of religious conservatism; and so devoid is Greek ecclesiastical history since the Middle Ages of any element of innovating life that the student is tempted almost to surmise a national loss of faculty. Greek intellectual life since the fall of Constantinople, however, is only a steady sequence from that which went before. After the overthrow of the Latin kingdom set up by the Crusaders, and the restoration of Greek rule, the whole nation was very naturally thrown back on its traditions, recoiling from further contact with the West; and the process

of fixation was repeated for what of Greek life was left after the Turkish conquest. The extraordinary gift for despotic government shown by the first race of Ottoman Turks brought about a resigned degradation on the Christian side. Allowed a sufficient measure of toleration to make them "prefer the domination of the Sultan to that of any Christian potentate," they paid to him not only their taxes but, for a time, a large annual tribute of children, with perfect submission, and thus, in the words of the British historian of modern Greece, "sank with wonderful rapidity, and without an effort, into the most abject slavery." Many indeed became Mohammedans to escape the tribute of children, which after a time ceased to be exacted, becoming rare in the seventeenth century.

In such circumstances the Christian priesthood and remaining laity were thrown very closely together, somewhat as happened in Ireland under English rule, and the result was a perfect devotion on the part of the Greek peasantry to their creed. It is accordingly claimed as the force which preserved their nationality. But the nationality so preserved could not well do much credit to the creed, which, in turn, gave Greeks a ground of differentiation from their conquerors without supplying any force of retrieval or progress. What was secured was not moral union but merely doctrinal persistence in the state of subjection; and the conqueror "availed himself of the hoary bigotry and infantine vanity of Hellenic dotage to use the Greek church as a means of enslaving the nation." The first Sultan sagaciously appointed a conservative Patriarch, and left Christian disputes alone. The result was that the Church was kept

impotent by its own quarrels and corruptions. Unity of forms alone remained; simony "became a part of the constitution of the Orthodox Church," the women of the Sultan's harem selling Christian ecclesiastical offices; and Christian life as such set up in the Moslem onlookers an immovable contempt. "No more selfish and degraded class of men has ever held power," says Finlay, "than the archonts of modern Greece and the Phanariots of Constantinople." Greek life remained at its best in the rural districts, where the old village governments were allowed to subsist, and where accordingly the people kept apart from the corrupt and oppressive Turkish law courts.

The Church in particular exhibited in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in a worse degree, all the corruption and backwardness of that of the west in the pre-Reformation period. Greek monasteries, despite attempts at reform by single emperors, had long been in large measure places of comfortable retreat for members of the upper classes; and under Turkish rule they became still more so, acting however as centres of political intrigue in addition. The result was that, with every facility for such study as the Benedictines carried on in the west, the Greek monks as a rule left learning alone, and were active chiefly as Turkish political agents, in the manner of the western Jesuits. The secular clergy at the same time became so depressed economically that they were commonly obliged to work with their hands for a living; and though those of the country districts were as a rule morally much superior to those of the towns, all alike were necessarily very ignorant. In the towns, where many of the aristocracy had become Moslems at the conquest, both clergy and monks

frequently apostatised to Islam, three cases being recorded in the year 1675; and about that time there is a curious record of the Turks putting a Christian renegade to death for cursing his own religion in the divan.

It is needless to say that Greek Christianity never had the slightest countervailing success in converting Moslems. In addition to the spectacle of Christian degradation constantly under their eyes, the Turks were in a position to say that no trust could ever be put in the good faith of a Christian State which made a treaty with them. Thus even when the usual diseases of despotism and dogmatism corroded the Turkish polity, the Christians counted for nothing as an element either of regeneration or of criticism; and no Turk ever looked to their creed as a possible force of reform, though in the period of energy the ablest Turkish statesman always saw the wisdom of ruling them tolerantly, in the Turkish interest, and sought to win them to Islam. Outside of Greece proper, accordingly, the Greek Church never regained any ground in the Turkish empire; and in the age of the conquest, when the expulsion of Jews from Spain drove many of that race to Turkey, they were everywhere preferred to Christians, whom they ousted, further, from many industrial and commercial positions in the towns, becoming the chief bankers, physicians, and merchants, and so helping to depress the Christians.

No race could under such conditions maintain a high intellectual life; and among Greek Christians orthodoxy was a matter of course. While Venice held the Morea at the end of the seventeenth century, and while Genoa ruled some of the islands, the same state

of things prevailed under Catholic rule. When accordingly the sense of nationality began to grow in the eighteenth century, it was from the first associated with the national religion. In the first quarter of the eighteenth century, Catholic propaganda was carried on in Chios and elsewhere under French auspices, and the Greek Church persuaded the Turkish Government to prohibit proselytism. At no period does the strife between easterns and westerns at the Holy Sepulchre seem to have ceased; and it now began to worsen. The wars between Austria and Turkey, however, began the gradual emancipation of the Greek people from servitude, by putting an outside pressure on the Turkish Government; the Russians continued the process; and the new friendly relations now set up between Greek and other Christians developed a new Greek sentiment of racial hostility to the Turks. At the same time, the hostility of the Christian powers made the Porte inclined to attach the Greek upper class by giving them privileges as Turkish officials, and thus the national self-respect was on that side further encouraged, despite the corruption of the favoured class. Probably Russian influence in the eighteenth century did most to arouse national aspirations, Russia being specially welcome as holding the Greek form of Christianity; but the Russian attempt to secure sovereignty as the price of military help checked the movement for independence; and it needed the contagion of the French revolutionary movement to cause a vigorous revival. Then Russia on political grounds combined with the Porte to resist French influence from the Levant and the Ionian islands; and when in 1815 the revived Ionian Republic was placed under British protection, Russia

and Turkey continued to combine in jealousy of western influence.

English rule in the Ionian Islands in turn was "neither wise nor liberal," and while it subsisted did nothing for Greek development; but it remains the fact that Russia, holding the Greek creed, never aimed sympathetically at Greek liberation. That came about at length through the fervour of national feeling set up at the French Revolution, and encouraged by a common European sympathy, grounded not on religion but on admiration for ancient and pagan Greece as the great exemplar of civilisation and intellectual life. The same admiration for their ancestors was naturally aroused among the Greeks themselves, and was their strongest political impulse. "Ecclesiastical ties greatly facilitated union, but they neither created the impulse towards independence, nor infused the enthusiasm which secured success."

Since the achievement of Greek independence, however, the people have remained substantially orthodox. Though they are no longer withheld from intercourse with the west, but have on the contrary shown a large measure of cosmopolitanism, their intellectual life remains relatively fixed, and the new complacency of independence backs the old complacency of orthodoxy. An excessive devotion to politics and political intrigue continues to absorb the mental activity of the people; and literary veneration for the classic past hampers the free play of intelligence on higher problems. The recent "Gospel Riots" at Athens exhibit the state of real culture. Some years ago, on the urging of the Queen, there was made a translation of the New Testament into the living language of the people, or into one midway

between that and the artificial academic tongue which has been developed among the literary class. Recently, however, what appears to be a more truly vernacular version began to be published in an Athenian journal; and it was against this that the students and others concerned directed their indignation, bringing about by their disturbances an actual change of ministry. Orthodox sentiment and orthodox ignorance appear to be the moving forces; so that at the beginning of the twentieth century Greece can claim to be the most bigoted of Christian countries. Doubtless the consciousness of possessing the continuous apostolic tradition is an important psychological factor in the special conservatism of belief, as is literary past-worship in the conservatism of speech.

When we turn to Russia, where the creed of the Greek Church, though under an independent Patriarch, is that of the State, we find the usual phenomena of European intellectual life specially marked. In no other country, perhaps, is rationalism or indifference more nearly universal among the educated class; and nowhere is faith more uncritical among the mass. Among them the use and adoration of icons—pictures of Jesus or the Madonna or of the saints, embellished in various ways—is universal in both private and public devotion; and a certain number of images, credited with miraculous virtue, earn great revenues for the monasteries or churches which possess them. The mass of the parish clergy (who like those of Greece may marry before ordination, but not a second time) are so ignorant as to be unconcerned about educated unbelief; and the Church as a whole has little or no political influence, being thoroughly subject to the political administration, or at least to the authority of the Tsar.

In the medieval period, monasteries in Russia underwent the same evolution as elsewhere, the monks passing from poverty to corporate wealth, and owning in particular multitudes of serfs. Their lands and serfs, however, were secularised in the eighteenth century; and since then, though some five hundred monasteries continue to exist, they have counted for little in the national life. Ecclesiastical discipline has in general been always rigorous under the autocracy; and in the eighteenth century it was common to flog priests cruelly for almost any breach of discipline. And though Russia has for ages abounded in dissenting sects, at no time has any movement of reform come from the clergy. No church has been more steadily unintellectual. All progress in Russia has come from the stimulus of western culture, beginning under Peter the Great, and continuing throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; and though some men of genius, as the great novelist, Dostoyevsky, who was anti-rationalist, and Count Tolstoy, who is heretically religious, have been exceptions to the rule, the higher Russian culture is predominantly rationalistic.

The numerous dissident sects of Russia, which represent in general unorganised developments of the spirit of Bible-worshipping Protestantism, have been broadly classed as follows:—1. Sects such as the Molokani and Stundists, which found on the Scriptures, but are not literalists, and resort at times to inward light for interpretation. 2. Sects which disregard Scripture, and follow the doctrine of special leaders. 3. Sects which believe in the re-incarnation of Christ. 4. Sects given to the religion of physical excitement; some being erotic, as the Jumpers; some

flagellant, as the Khlysti; some fanatically ascetic, as the Skoptsi or Eunuchs. All alike, however near they may be to orthodoxy, are liable to official persecution equally with the members of the recent sect of Dukhobortsi, associated with Count Tolstoy, whose doctrine is non-resistance and refusal to bear arms. Thus Christianity in Russia is variously identified with the most medieval formalism and bigotry and the most exalted enthusiasm for concord; while the march of intelligence proceeds as far as it may in disregard of all supernaturalist creeds. But the vast mass of the Russian peasantry stands for the faith of the Middle Ages, and may now be said to constitute the most religious section of total Christendom.

Between eastern and western Christianity, finally, there seems no prospect of fraternisation, though hopes of that kind have been sometimes floated in the Anglican Church. At the church of the Holy Sepulchre the Greeks and the Latins are in chronic strife; it was one of their squabbles that brought about the Crimean War; and in the present year they have shed blood in one of their scuffles. The visitor to Jerusalem thus witnesses the standing spectacle of an impassive Turkish soldier keeping the peace between mobs of Christian devotees, eager to fly at each other's throats.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RELATION TO PROGRESS.

§ 1. *Moral Influence.*

It is a deeply significant fact that in recent times the defence of Christianity takes much more often the form of a claim that it is socially useful than that of an attempt to prove it true. The argument from utility is indeed an old one: it is an error to say, as did J. S. Mill, that men have been little concerned to urge it in comparison with the argument from truth; but the former is now in special favour. Insofar as it proceeds upon a survey of Christian history it may here be left to the test of confrontation with the facts; but as it is constantly urged with regard to the actual state of life and faith, it is necessary to consider it in conclusion.

The chief difficulty in such an inquiry is that the most irreconcilable formulas are put forth on the side and in the name of belief. Commonly it is claimed that all that is good in current morality is derived from Christian sources; that morally scrupulous unbelievers are so because of their religious training or environment; and that a removal of the scaffolding of creed will bring to ruin the edifice of conduct that is held to have been reared by its means. It is not usually realised that such an argument ends in crediting to paganism and Judaism the alleged moral

merits of the first Christians. It might indeed be suggested, as against the traditional account of their pre-eminent goodness, that either they, in turn, owed their character to their antecedents, or their creed lost its efficacy after the first generation. But the historic answer to the claim is that there has never been any such moralising virtue in the Christian or any other creed in historically familiar times as need alarm any one for the moral consequences of its gradual disappearance. All sudden and revolutionary changes in popular moral standards certainly appear to be harmful; but the great majority of such changes in the Christian era have been worked under the auspices of faith, having consisted not in the abandonment of belief, but in the restatement of ethics in terms of "inspiration." Unbelief proceeds with no such cataclysmic speed. It is not conceivable that the gradual dissolution of supernaturalist notions will ever of itself work such evil as is told of in the story of the military evangel of Christianity in the Dark Ages, the Crusades, the Albigensian massacres, the conquests of Mexico and Peru, the Anabaptist movement at the outset of the Reformation, or the massacre of St. Bartholomew, to say nothing of the death-roll of the Inquisition and the mania against witchcraft. Even the bloodshed of the Reign of Terror in the French Revolution, wrought under peculiar political perturbation, was under the auspices not of atheists but of theists.

If it be asked wherein lies the specific value of dogma as a moral restraint, in terms of actual observation, there are to be found no facts that can induce a scientific inquirer to struggle for the maintenance of a creed believed to be untrue in the hope that it will

prove morally useful. Moral evils may for the purposes of such an inquiry be broadly classed under the heads of vice, crime, poverty, and war; and only in regard to the first is there even a plausible pretence that supernaturalist belief is a preventive. It might indeed seem likely, on first thought, that a cancelling of supernaturalist vetoes on the pleasures of the senses may lead to increased indulgence; but those vetoes apply to all sensual indulgence alike, and no one now pretends that unbelievers are more given to gluttony and drunkenness than believers; though the latter may doubtless claim, in respect of the Catholic Church, to include a larger number of extreme ascetics, as do the votaries of faiths pronounced by Catholics to be false. While, then, there may and do arise modifications of the religious formulas of ethics, there is absolutely no reason to apprehend that any form of conduct will be less considerate on naturalist than on supernaturalist principles. The Christian doctrine of forgiveness for sins must do more to encourage licence than can be done by any rationalistic ethic. Even where naturalism might give a sanction which Christian dogma withholds, as in the case of suicides, it is not found that any statistical change is set up by unbelief. Poverty, again, has probably been normally worse in Christian Europe throughout the whole Christian era than in any previous or non-Christian civilisation; and the most systematic schemes for its extinction in recent times are of non-Christian origin, though a personal and habitual effort to modify the stress of poverty is one of the more creditable features of organised Christian work. As regards crime, the case is much the same. The vast majority of criminals hold supernaturalist

beliefs, atheism being extremely rare among them; and while many Christians have in the past done good and zealous work towards a humane and rational treatment of criminals, the only scientific and comprehensive schemes now on foot are framed on naturalist lines, and are denounced by professed Christians on theological lines, as being sinfully lenient to wrong-doing. Thus supernaturalism remains prone to a cruel and irrational ideal of retribution.

It is in regard to the influence of religious teaching on international relations, however, that the saddest conclusions are forced upon the student of Christian history. The foregoing pages have shown how potent has been organised Christianity to promote strife and slaughter, how impotent to restrain them. If any instance could be found in history of a definite prevention of war on grounds of Christian as distinguished from prudential motive, it would have been there recorded. So flagrant is the record that when it is cited the Christian defence veers round from the position above viewed to one which unconsciously places the source of civilisation in human reason. Yet even thus the historic facts are misstated. The enormity of Christian strifes in the past is now apologetically accounted for by the fantastic theorem that hitherto men have not "understood" Christianity, and that only in modern times have its founder's teachings been properly comprehended. Obviously there has been no such development: the gospel's inculcations of love and concord are as simple as may be, and have at all times been perfectly intelligible: what has been lacking is the habit of mind and will that secures the fulfilment of such precepts. And recent experience has painfully proved, once for

all, that the religious or "believer's" temper, instead of being normally conducive to such action, is normally the worst hindrance to it.

An explanation is to be found in a study of the normal results of guiding conduct by emotional leanings rather than by critical reflection. The former is peculiarly the process of evangelical religion. Hence comes the practical inefficacy of a love of peace derived either inertly through acceptance of a form of words declared to be sacred, or through an emotional assent to such words emotionally propounded. Emotions so evolved are of the surface, and are erased as easily as they are induced, by stronger emotions proceeding from the animal nature. Only a small minority of Christians, accordingly, are found to resist the rush of warlike passions; and some who call most excitedly for peace when there is no war are found among those most excited by the war passion as soon as the contagion stirs. It may be noted as a decisive fact in religious history that in regard to the war which rages while these pages are being written, the movement of critical opposition and expostulation succeeds almost in the ratio of men's remoteness from the Christian faith. Among the Quaker sect, so long honorably distinguished by its testimony against war, there has been a considerable reversion to the normal temper, as if the old conviction had been in many cases lost in the process of merely hereditary transmission. Among the Christian Churches so called, by far the most peace-loving is the Unitarian, which rejects the central Christian dogma. And among the public men associated with the protest against the war, the number known to be rationalists is proportionally as large as that of the

supernaturalists is small. The personal excellence and elevation of moral feeling shown among the latter group is thus no warrant for seeing the cause in their creed. In such matters there is no invariable rule, every section exhibiting psychical divergence within itself; but it is now statistically clear that the standing claim for the conventional creed as being peculiarly helpful to the cause of peace is false.

Such tests are of course not those that will be first put by a scrupulous mind seeking to know whether the Christian creed be true. Rather they are forced on such a mind by the tactics of believers who as a rule seek to evade the fundamental issue. It is not unlikely, therefore, in view of present painful experience, that for some time to come the stress of defence will shift to the attempt, never entirely abandoned, to defend the faith on evidential or philosophic grounds. We have thus to consider finally the apparent effects of Christian credences and institutions on the intellectual life of the time.

§ 2. *Intellectual Influence.*

So far as it can be historically traced, the intellectual influence of Christianity was relatively at its best when it began to be propounded as a creed in critical relation to Judaism. Intellectual gain was checked as soon as it became a substantive creed, demanding submissive acceptance. From that point forward, it becomes a restraint on intellectual freedom, save in so far as it stirred believers to a one-sided criticism of pagan beliefs, a process of which the educational effect was promptly annulled by a

veto on its extension to the beliefs of the critics. It has been argued indeed that modern science has been signally advanced by the mental bias that goes with monotheism; but the historical fact is that Jewish monotheism was much less friendly to science than Babylonian polytheism; that the beginnings of Greek science were among polytheists and, perhaps, atheists; that Saracen monotheism owed its scientific stimulus to the recovered thought of polytheistic Greece; and that, whatever impulse a truly monotheistic philosophy may have given to modern science, the usual influence of Christian belief has been to override the idea of invariable causation in nature. Even after the belief in recurrent miracles is disavowed, the doctrine and practice of prayer remain to represent the old concept.

On the other hand, the kind of violence done to the instinct for concrete or historical truth by the frauds and delusions of the early and medieval Church, though greatly attenuated in modern times, has never ended. Critical judgment has only slowly recovered the strength and stature it had in the pre-Christian world; and wherever faith has plenary rule such judgment is liable to arbitrary interdict. It is true that even in the nineteenth century some great servants of science have been either orthodox Christians or devout theists. Faraday and Joule, Pasteur and Kelvin, are cases in point. But instead of the religious creed having in such cases furnished the cue or the motive to the scientific work done, it is found to be out of all logical relation to it, and to be a mere obstruction to the scientific use of the reason on the religious problem itself.

To a considerable extent, the rigid adherence to

religious beliefs or professions in defiance of evidence is on all fours with any other form of conservatism, as the social and the political. Inasmuch, however, as religion proffers both a specific comfort in this life and a specific reward in another, it has a power of intellectual fixation with which no other can compare; and there is something unique in the spectacle of religious doctrines kept in an unchanged form by means of an economic basis consecrated to them. It has been seen in the foregoing history that for two thousand years no creed with such a basis has been overthrown either wholly or locally save by a force which confiscated its endowments or suppressed its worship. Thus, and thus only, did Christianity triumph over southern and northern paganism; thus did Islam triumph over Christianity in parts of its world, and fall again before it in others; and thus did Protestantism expel Catholicism from many countries and suffer expulsion in turn from some of them. Where endowments can subsist, with freedom of worship, no form of doctrine that is wedded to the endowments ever yields directly to criticism.

Christianity has thus had in the modern world a more sinister influence on the intellectual life than was wrought by any phase of paganism even in periods when the intelligence of the ancient world was divorced from its established religion. The divorce is now more complete than ever before; but the bribe to conformity is greater than ever, relatively at least to the light of the time. The result is a maximum of insincerity, whether or not the bribe is given by a standing endowment. Dissenting or voluntary churches in the Protestant countries offer an income to more or less educated men on

condition of propounding the creed of the past; and the more intelligent minority within the churches are weighed down in every effort at a modification of doctrine by the orthodoxy of the uncritical or fanatical many, who control the endowments. Social and commercial life conform to the conditions, and everywhere the profession of belief is far in excess of the actuality—a state of things unfavourable to all morality.

It is not only in religion and ethics that the influence of endowed and organised Christianity is thus intellectually baneful. Every science in turn, from the days of Galileo, has had to fight for its life against the sanctified ignorance of all the churches; and while the physical sciences, which can be taught without open reference to traditional error, have carried their point and received endowment in turn, happily without being tied down to any documents, the moral sciences are either kept in tutelage to theology in the universities of many countries, our own included, or forced to leave out of their scope the phenomena of religion itself, and in particular the sociological problem of Christian history. There is to this day not a single chair of sociology in a British university; and even in the United States, where such chairs are common, they and the historical chairs alike are barred from any free treatment of religious evolution. Ethical teaching is similarly limited; and a science which on that side threatened to turn the flank of religious doctrine—to wit, phrenology—was at an early stage of its progress in the first half of the nineteenth century successfully ostracised, so that, lacking the expert handling without which no science can be kept sound, it has been relegated even for

most naturalists to the limbo of exploded error, without ever having been scientifically confuted.

In fine, the science of society, the most momentous of all, is by reason of the very nature of organised religion kept in trammels, lest it should undermine the reign of faith. It makes its way in virtue of the whole scientific movement of the age, and is perhaps most progressive in the countries where, as in France and Italy, an official Catholicism has prevented the academic compromise between faith and science which is effected in the Protestant world, but is powerless to keep independent science out of the universities. In those countries, however, there are compromises of other kinds; and in France there has recently been seen, in the case of Captain Dreyfus, the spectacle of the clerical influence combining with that of the army to enforce an insensate act of injustice, less from any intelligent motive of a direct bearing than for the sake of a general alliance in which each of the two great conservative and anti-progressive institutions backs the other for general reactionary ends. Thus religious feeling abets social and political malice; and such movements as that of anti-Semitism, fostered by Christian organisations, can secure support from others as the price of clerical support.

As a result of its autocratic and centralised system, further, Catholicism is a special force of political conservatism in Catholic countries, with the single exception of Ireland, where its dependence on the mass of the people keeps it in close alliance with their nationalist movement in despite of any papal restrictions. Such an alliance is of course unfavourable to intellectual progress on other lines; and English Protestant policy, largely directed by sectarian feeling,

thus preserves in Ireland the type of Catholicism it fears. Such Catholicism retards popular education wherever it can; and the one general advantage the Protestant countries can claim over the Catholic is their lower degree of illiteracy. On the other hand the rationalism of the more enlightened Catholic countries, where the Church lacks official power, is as a rule more explicit, more awake to the nature of the force opposed to it; while in Protestant Germany it is little concerned to oppose a church with small organised or academic influence, and attempts singularly little popular criticism of faith. Every country thus presents some special type of intellectual harm or dissimulation resulting from the presence of organised Christianity; and in all alike it makes in varying degrees an obstacle to light.

In the highest degree does this seem to be true of the land where it has had the longest continuous life. Alone among the nations Greece contributes nothing to the world's renovation. Italy, despite the papacy, has a swarm of eager and questioning thinkers, working at the human sciences; Spain stirs under all the leaden folds of clericalism; but Greece, where the faith has never undergone eclipse since Justinian's day, remains intellectually Byzantine, vainly divided between Christian dogma and an external classic tradition, neither ancient nor modern. Yet this is the one European country where belief is ostensibly untroubled by its enemy. It is hard to say how far the surface of orthodoxy conforms to the mental life underneath; but there is no escape from the conclusion that a new mental life can return to the land of Aristotle only in the measure in which it readmits from the west the spirit of search and

challenge which he and Socrates left to re-inspire a world growing moribund under the spell of faith.

§ 3. *Conclusion and Prognosis.*

It follows from the foregoing history and survey that Christianity, regarded by its adherents as either the one progressive and civilising religion or the one most helpful to progress and civilisation, is in no way vitally different from the others which have a theistic basis, and is in itself neither more nor less a force of amelioration than any other founding on sacred books and supernaturalist dogmas. Enlightened Christians with progressive instincts have justified them in terms of Christian doctrine, even as enlightened Moslems, Brahmans, and Buddhists have justified their higher ideals in terms of their doctrine; and the special fortune of Christianity has lain in this, that after nearly a thousand years in which it was relatively retrograde as compared with Islam, which in the latter half of the time was progressive, both being what they were in virtue of institutions and environment, the environment was so far politically changed that the Christian countries gradually progressed, while the Moslem countries lost ground. To-day it is becoming clear to instructed eyes that the faiths were not the causal forces; and in Asia the rapid development of Japan in the nineteenth century has vividly demonstrated the fallacy of the Christian view. As there was great progress under ancient paganism, under each one of the great creeds or cults of Asia, under Islam, and under Christianity, so there may be much greater progress in the absence of them all, in virtue

of a wider knowledge, a more scientific polity, and a more diffused culture.

The ultimate problem is to forecast the future. A confident faith in continual progress is one of the commonest states of mind of the present, the consciously scientific age; and in view of the unmistakable decadence of the creeds as such, it is natural to rationalists to expect an early reduction of Christianity to the status now held by "folk-lore," a species of survival dependent on ignorance upon the one hand and antiquarian curiosity on the other. But while this may be called probable, there can be no scientific certainty in the matter. For one thing, the process must for economic reasons be much slower than used to be thought likely, for instance, in the time of Voltaire, who allowed a century for the extinction of the Christian creed. Voltaire was so far right that a century has seen Christianity abandoned, after a reaction, by the best intelligence of our age, as it was by that of his. But there may be more reactions; and there is always a conceivable possibility of a total decadence, such as overtook the civilisation of the old Mediterranean world.

The question is at bottom one of political science. Greek and Roman civilisation failed primarily through the incapacity of the ancient States to set up a polity of international peace, secondarily through the effects of the military despotism which that failure superinduced. As the problem is all of a piece, avoidance of the old error will presumably mean avoidance of the old doom. A similar political failure in the modern world would in all likelihood mean the same sequence of military imperialism, possibly with better economic management, but with the same phenomena

of intellectual decline and reversion to fanaticism and superstition among populations debarred from political activity and free speech. It is indeed dimly conceivable that, as one man of genius has suggested by way of fiction, the mere warfare of capital and labour may end in the degradation of the people, and the consequent reduction of upper-class life to the plane of mere sensuous gratification and "practical" science. In either event, a religion now seen by instructed men to be incredible may be preserved by a community neither instructed nor religious.

The hope of the cause of reason then lies with the political ideals and movements which best promise to save democracy and to elevate the mass. It is hopefully significant that, as we have seen, the most systematic and scientific of these movements are pronouncedly rationalistic; and it is safe to say that their ultimate success depends on their rationalism. All past movements for the social salvation of the mass have failed for lack of social science; and Christianity in its most humane and sympathetic forms remains the negation of such science.

It is essential to a durable advance, however, that it should be pure of violence, and utterly tolerant. When popular education has emptied all or any of the churches, as it has already gone some way towards doing, the spontaneous revenue of those which are voluntary bodies will have ceased; and by that time the majority will be in a position to dispose of national funds and to tax accumulated endowments in the social interest. Such a course will be facile to a society which provides work for all and sustains all; and when the bribe of sectarian endowment is thus made void, the more factitious life of ancient error will be

at an end. But the most speculative construction of the future provides for the widest individual and psychological freedom; and there will have been no true triumph of reason if philosophic and historic error have not a free field. The Utopia of rationalism will be reached when supernaturalism in the present sense of the term shall have passed away as the belief in witchcraft has done, without pressure of pains and penalties. And that Utopia will be the rendezvous, belike, of more than one social ideal—of all, indeed, which trust to reason for the attainment of righteousness.

PDF created by Rajesh Arya, Gujarat (20 Feb 2025)

SYNOPSIS OF LITERATURE.

PART I.—PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY.

CHAPTER I.—THE BEGINNINGS.

§ 1. *Documentary Clues.*

OF the countless works discussing early Christian literature and the formation of the New Testament "Canon," the following may be consulted with profit:—All relevant articles in the new *Encyclopædia Biblica* (A. & C. Black); *Supernatural Religion: An Inquiry into the Reality of Divine Revelation*, 6th ed. revised, 1875, 2 vols.; 3rd vol. 1877; *A Reply to Dr. Lightfoot's Essays*, by the same author, 1889; *An Introduction to the Study of the New Testament*, by Dr. Samuel Davidson, 2nd ed. revised, 1882, 2 vols.; *The Apostolical Fathers*, by Dr. James Donaldson, 1874 and later; Renan's preface to his *Saint Paul*, the Appendice to his *L'Antéchrist*, and his *Les Evangiles*; Mr. E. B. Nicholson's compilation, *The Gospel According to the Hebrews*, 1879; *History of the Canon in the Christian Church*, by Professor Reuss, Eng. tr. 1890; *Apostolical Records of Early Christianity*, by the Rev. Dr. Giles, 1886; Strauss's second *Leben Jesu*, tr. in Eng. (not always accurately) as *A New Life of Jesus*, 2nd ed. 1879, 2 vols.; and the old research of Lardner on *The Credibility of the Gospels* (Part II. ch. i. to xxix. in vol. ii. of *Works*, ed. 1835) which covers the ground pretty fully, indeed diffusely. A conspectus of the early sources is given (Gr. and Lat.) in Kirchhofer's *Quellensammlung zur Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Canons*, 1844 and later; but the most comprehensive work of the kind is Harnack's *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius* (1893) in two great volumes; and the still bulkier *Chronologie* which follows thereon. Of real value is the recent survey of Professor Arnold Meyer. *Die moderne Forschung über die Geschichte des Urchristentums*, 1898. [The writings ascribed to the Apostolic Fathers are translated in the first volume of the "Ante-Nicene Library"; those ascribed to Justin Martyr in the second volume.]

§ 2. *The Earliest Christian Sects.*

The sources as to the Nazarenes and Ebionites are given by Bishop Lightfoot in his ed. of the Epistle to the Galatians, p. 298, ff. (diss. reprinted in *Dissertations on the Apostolic Age*, 1892, p. 74, ff.); also in W. R. Sorley's *Jewish Christians and Judaism*, 1881, p. 66, ff. Both proceed on the traditional assumptions. Critical discrimination between the Ebionites and "Nazarenes" begins in modern times with Mosheim, *Vindicia Antiquæ Christianorum Disciplinæ contra Tolandi Nazarenum*, 1720. See also his *Commentarium de rebus Christianorum ante Constantinum*, 1753, Sæc. II. § xxxix. (Eng. tr. vol. ii, p. 194, ff.). His position was developed by Gieseler (1828), and has become the basis of later ecclesiastical historiography, as in the above-cited writers, and in Weizsäcker's *Apostolic Age*. A new and more searching analysis of the phenomena, on lines previously suggested but not developed, is made by P. Hochart in his *Etudes d'histoire religieuse*, 1890, ch. iv. and v. For the positions of the present section, in so far as they are not there fully reasoned, the grounds will be found in the author's *Christianity and Mythology*, 1900, Part III. 1st Div. § 9, and in the *National Reformer*, 1888, March 18th and 25th, April 1st, 8th, and 15th.

§ 3. *Personality of the Nominal Founder.*

Of the more rationalistic Lives of Jesus, so-called, that of Renan is the most charming and the least scientific; those by Strauss the most systematic and educative; that of Thomas Scott, "The English Life of Jesus," the most compendious view of the conflicts of the Gospel narratives. Evan Meredith's *Prophet of Nazareth* (1864) is rather a stringent criticism of the whole Christian system of ethics, evidences, and theology (rejecting supernaturalism but assuming a historical Christ) than a scientific search for a personality behind the Gospels. It however passes many acute criticisms. Later German Lives of Christ, such as those of Keim and Weiss, are useful in respect of their scholarly comprehensiveness, but have little final critical value. A more advanced stage of documentary criticism than is seen in any of these is reached in the second section of the article *Gospels*, by Professor Schmiedel, in the new *Encyclopædia Biblica*. The grounds on which the present section carries the process of elimination yet further will be found developed in the author's *Christianity and Mythology*, Part III. *The Gospel Myths*, Div. ii.; also in an article in the *Reformer*, July, 1901. Concerning the Talmudic Jesus the documentary data are given by Baring Gould, *The Lost and Hostile Gospels*, 1874; Joel, *Blicke in die Religionsgeschichte*, Breslau, 1880; Derenbourg, *Essai sur l'histoire et la Géographie de Palestine*, 1867;

T. Theodores, essay on *The Talmud* in *Essays and Addresses by Professors and Lecturers of Owen's College* (Macmillan, 1874), pp. 368–370; and Lightfoot, *Horæ Hebraicæ*, on Matt. ii. 14, xxvii. 56, and Luke vii. 2. Compendious views of the process of textual analysis, as applied to the Gospels by students who still hold to the historic actuality of the Gospel Jesus, may be found in *The Synoptic Problem*, by A. J. Jolly (Macmillan, 1893); *The Formation of the Gospels*, by F. P. Badham (Kegan Paul, 2nd ed. 1892); *The Common Tradition of the Synoptic Gospels*, by Dr. Abbott and W. G. Rushbrooke (Macmillan, 1884); and *The First Three Gospels*, by J. Estlin Carpenter (Sunday School Association, 2nd ed. 1890). Of the extensive continental literature of this subject during the past half-century, typical and important examples are Baur's *Kritische Untersuchungen über die kanonischen Evangelien* (1847), Scholten's *Het oudste Evangelie*, 1868 (tr. in German, 1869); Gustave D'Eichthal's *Les Evangiles*, 1863; H. J. Holtzmann's *Die synoptischen Evangelien, ihr Ursprung und geschichtliche Charakter*, 1863; and Berthold Weiss's *Text-kritik der vier Evanglien*, 1899. Holtzmann's *Lehrbuch der historisch-kritischen Einleitung in das Neue Testament* (2te. Aufl. 1885) is a good summary of the general discussion.

§ 4. *Myth of the Twelve Apostles.*

As to the Jewish Twelve Apostles, consult Jost, *Geschichte des Judenthums*, 1850, ii. 159–60; Kitto's Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature, art. *Apostle;* Basnage, *Histoire des Juifs*, ed. 1716, liv. ii. ch. ii. §§ 7, 8, and liv. iii. ch. ii. §§ 10, 11; Mosheim's *Commentaries* as before cited, Eng. tr. i. 121; and other authorities discussed by the author in the *National Reformer*, 1887, May 8th and 15th, November 20th and 27th, December 4th; also in *Christianity and Mythology*, Pt. III. Div. i. § 19. For recent views on the alleged apostolic epistles see Professor Arnold Meyer's work, cited under § 1. The text of the important *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, first published in 1883, is ably edited and translated by Professors Hitchcock and Brown (London ed. Nimmo), whose version was made the basis of a revised translation, with variorum notes, by the author, published in the *National Reformer*, November 1st and 8th, 1891. The *Teaching* has appeared also in the following translations:—By Dr. Farrar, in the *Contemporary Review*, May, 1884; by the Rev. A. Gordon (tr. sold at Essex Hall, London); by M. Sabatier with text and commentary (Paris, 1885); by Professor Harnack; and by the Rev. Mr. Heron in his *Church of the Apostolic Age*, 1888. As to its obviously Jewish basis compare Dr. Taylor's *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, 1886, with Harnack's *Die Apostellehre und die jüdischen beiden Wege*, 1886. On the "Brethren of the Lord"

see Bishop Lightfoot's excursus, reprinted in his *Dissertations on the Apostolic Age*. The Judas myth and the characteristics of Peter are discussed in *Christianity and Mythology*, Part III. Div. i. §§ 20, 21. For the Egyptian God Petra see the *Book of the Dead*, Budge's tr., p. 123.

§ 5. *Primary Forms of the Cult.*

The theory that the gospel narrative of the Last Supper, the Passion, the Betrayal, Trial, Crucifixion, and Resurrection, constitute a mystery-play or plays, is set forth by the author in an article in the *Reformer*, November, 1901. On pre-Christian Semitic "mysteries" see Professor Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, Lect. vi.–xi; and on the ancient conception of sacrifice in general consult that work; also Wellhausen's *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*, Eng. tr. Pt. I. ch. iii.; the work of Fustel de Coulanges on *La Cité Antique;* and Mr. J. G. Frazer's great treatise, *The Golden Bough* (2nd ed. 3 vols. 1900). Concerning the private religious societies among the Greeks, the standard authority is M. Foucart, *Les Associations religieuses chez les Grecs*, 1873; see also ch. xviii. of Renan's *Les Apôtres*. The imitation of pagan institutions in the Christian Church is dealt with by the late Dr. Edwin Hatch, in his *Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church*, 1890; and some of the relations between the Jewish Passover and coincident pagan feasts are suggested in the valuable old treatise of J. Spencer, *De Legibus Hebræorum* (1685 and later), lib. ii. cap. 4. The part played by the child-image in pagan and Christian mysteries is noted in *Christianity and Mythology*, Pt. II. *Christ and Krishna*, sec. xiii. On other details consult Schürer, *History of the Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, Div. II. The question as to the rise of baptism comes up in the Clementine *Homilies* and *Recognitions*, on which see Baur, *Church History*, Eng. tr., vol. i.; where also will be found the material of the controversy on the date of the Easter sacrament. As to the manner of crucifixion in antiquity see Dr. W. Brandt's *Die evangelische Geschichte und der Ursprung des Christenthums*, 1893, Theil II, § 5, and Pf. Hermann Fulda's treatise, *Das Kreuz und die Kreuzigung* (Breslau, 1878).

§ 6. *Rise of Gentile Christism.*

The early and bitter strife between the Jewish and Gentile parties in the Christist movement was first exhaustively studied by the Tübingen school. See the important works of its founder, F. C. Baur, *Das Christenthum und die christliche Kirche der drei ersten Jahrhunderte*, 1853 (Eng. tr. ent. *The Church History of the First Three Centuries*, 1878, 2 vols.) and *Paulus*, 1845 (Eng. tr. 2 vols. 1873);

also the work of Zeller on the *Contents and Origin of the Acts of the Apostles* (Eng. tr. 2 vols. 1875, with Overbeck's Introduction to the Acts, from De Wette's *Handbook*). Compare the somewhat more conservative treatise of Weizsäcker, *The Apostolic Age of the Christian Church*, Eng. tr. 2 vols. 1894, and the orthodox Neander's *History of the Planting and Training of the Christian Church by the Apostles* (Eng. tr. 2 vols. 1851), where however some decisive admissions are made as to the narrative of the Acts. The most comprehensive survey of the documentary discussion down to the present time is J. Jüngst's *Die Quellen der Apostelgeschichte* (Gotha, 1895). Some interesting concessions are made by Professor Ramsay in his work on *The Church and the Roman Empire before A.D. 170* (1893). On the Gentile parallels discussed consult Frazer's *Golden Bough*, and Havet's *Le Christianisme et ses origines*. The questions raised by the vogue of the term "Chrēstos" are well set forth and discussed in the brochure of the late Dr. J. Barr Mitchell, *Chrēstos: A Religious Epithet, its Import and Influence* (Williams and Norgate, 1880). Compare Renan, *Saint Paul*, p. 363, and refs. Various aspects of the general problem are set forth in the *Monumental Christianity* of J. P. Lundy (New York, 1876). For a good view of Gnosticism see C. W. King, *The Gnostics and their Remains*, 2nd ed. 1887; and for a survey of Samaritan tenets see J. W. Nutt, *Fragment of a Samaritan Targum*, 1874 (Introduction), and Reland's *Dissertatio de Monte Garizim*, in his *Diss. Misc.*, Pars I, 1706. A view of the ancient practices of cutting and gashing in the presence of the dead, etc., is given in John Spencer's treatise *De Legibus Hebræorum*, lib. ii. cc. 13, 14. The Myth of Simon Magus is discussed by the author in the *National Reformer*, January 29th, February 5th, and February 19th, 1893.

§ 7. *Growth of the Christ Myth.*

For details and references as to the pagan myths embodied in the Gospels, see the author's *Christianity and Mythology*, Pts. II and III. The evolution of the doctrine of the *Logos* is discussed by Professor James Drummond, in *The Jewish Messiah*, 1877, and *Philo Judæus*, 1888; by M. Nicolas, *Des doctrines religieuses des juifs*, 1860; and in Schürer's *Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, Div. II. vol. iii. Mr. Frazer presents the evidence as to the Semitic usage of sacrificing a mock-king in his *Golden Bough*, where however the problem is obscured by the acceptance of the Gospels as historical records. See also the article on *Jesus als Saturnalien-König*, by P. Wendland, in Hermes, xxxiii. (1898).

Chapter II.—THE ENVIRONMENT.

§ 1. *Social and Mental Conditions in the Roman Empire.*

The sociological forces and tendencies in the Greek and Roman civilisations are discussed in the author's *Introduction to English Politics*, Part I.; also in *A Short History of Freethought*, ch. iii. v. vi. and vii. For the social bearing of ancient religion consult Fustel de Coulanges, *La Cité Antique;* Boissier, *La Religion romaine d'Auguste aux Antonins* (2 tom. 4e édit. 1892); Burckhardt, *Griechische Culturgeschichte*, 3 Bde. 1898–1900; Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States* (vol. i. Oxford, 1896); and Maury, *Histoire des religions de la Grèce antique*, 3 tom. 1857. Renan has many suggestive pages on social conditions, particularly in *Les Apôtres;* but heed must be taken of the frequent contradictions in his generalisations. As to the religious life of the Greek private religious societies, see ch. xvii. of *Les Apôtres;* the treatise of M. Foucart, before cited; Dr. Hatch's Bampton lectures on *The Organisation of the Early Christian Churches;* and his Hibbert lectures on *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church.*

§ 2. *Jewish Orthodoxy.*

Schürer's *Jewish People in the Time of Christ* gives the main clues from Josephus, the Talmud, and the O. T. apocrypha. See further M. Friedländer's *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Christenthums* (Wien, 1894) for light as to the relations between the Pharisees and the common people. For a good general view see Reuss, *Histoire de la théologie chrétienne au siècle apostolique* (2e édit. 1860), liv. i. Nicolas, *Des doctrines religieuses des Juifs*, 1860, gives a fuller research. Accounts of the surviving "Nestorians" are given in *Missionary Researches in Armenia*, by E. Smith and H. D. O. Dwight, 1834, and in Dr. A. Grant's *The Nestorians*, 2nd ed. 1843.

§ 3. *Jewish Sects.*

A good conspectus and discussion of the data as to the Essenes is given by Dr. Ginsburg in his pamphlet *The Essenes*, 1864. See also Schürer, Div. II. vol. ii., and Bishop Lightfoot, *Dissertations on the Apostolic Age.*

§ 4. *Gentile Cults.*

The best mythological dictionary is Roscher's great *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie* (in progress), but Preller's *Griechiche Mythologie* and *Römische Mythologie* and Smith's

Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology (3 vols. 1844–49) give most of the data. In regard to the cults of Attis and Adonis, consult further Frazer's *Golden Bough* and Foucart *Des Associations religieuses chez les Grecs;* for the cult of Dionysos, the same; also (with caution) Mr. R. Brown's *Great Dionysiak Myth*, 2 vols. 1877–8, and the older *Recherches sur le Culte de Bacchus* of Rolle (3 tom. 1824), both works of great learning. Lucian's treatise *De Dea Syra* gives special information on Syrian religion. Sidelights are thrown on the cults in question by the Christian Fathers, in particular Julius Firmicus Maternus, *De errore profanarum religionum* (best ed. Halm's); Epiphanius, *De Hæresis:* Hippolytus, *Refutation of all Heresies* (trans. in Ante-Nicene Library, vol. vi.). The main clues to the Osiris cult are in *The Book of the Dead* (best Eng. tr. by Budge, 1898) and Plutarch's treatise *On Isis and Osiris*, which should be read, however, in the light of Tiele's or some other competent *History of Egyptian Religion.* The main data as to Mithraism are collected in the author's essay in *Religious Systems of the World* (3rd ed. 1892).

§ 5. *Ethics: Popular and Philosophic.*

The parallels and coincidences between the teachings of Paul and of Seneca are fully set forth by Bishop Lightfoot in the excursus on *Paul and Seneca* reprinted in his *Discussions on the Apostolic Age*, where also the significance of the parallels is considered, and the literature of the subject described. In the general connection may be consulted Havet's *Le Christianisme et ses origines*, 4 tom. 1872–84; Martha's *Les Moralistes sous l'empire romain*, 14e édit. 1881; Lecky's *History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne;* Baur's *Drei Abhandlungen zur Geschichte der alten Philosophie und ihres Verhältniss zum Christenthum* (new ed. 1876), where there is a thorough discussion of Seneca's case; Uhlhorn's *Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism* (Eng. tr. from 3rd Ger. ed. 1879); Renan's *Marc Aurèle*, and ch. xvii. of *Les Apôtres;* J. A. Farrer's *Paganism and Christianity*, 1891; W. M. Flinders Petrie's *Religion and Conscience in Ancient Egypt*, 1898; and Ludwig Feuerbach's *Essence of Christianity*, Eng. tr. by Marian Evans (George Eliot). The Jewish Rabbinical ethic is defended as against Christian attack in an able article on "Rabbinic Judaism and the Epistles of Paul" by C. G. Montefiore in the *Jewish Quarterly Review* for January, 1901. Some of the other issues are discussed in detail in the author's *Short History of Freethought*, cc. iv. vi. vii.

Chapter III.—CONDITIONS OF SURVIVAL.

§ 1. *Popular Appeal.*

See the references to ch. ii. § 5, concerning the prevalent moral ideas. As to the Montanists and other ascetic and antinomian sects see Baur, *Church History*, Eng. tr. vol. i. Pt. III., also Hatch, as cited. Concerning the results of the need to appeal to the pagan populace, note the admissions of Mosheim, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2 Cent. Pt. II. chs. iii. and iv.; of Dr. John Stoughton, *Ages of the Church*, 1855, Lect. iv.; of Waddington, *History of the Christian Church*, 1833, pp. 87, 89; and of Milman, *History of Christianity*, B. iv. cc. i. and iii.

§ 2. *Economic Causation.*

The organisation of the Assyrian and Babylonian priesthoods may be gathered from Sayce, Hibbert Lectures on the Religion of the Ancient Babylonians. On the Greek priesthoods compare Burckhardt, *Griechische Culturgeschichte*, Bd. II. Abs. II. § ii. As to the wealth of the priestly caste in Egypt see Diodorus Siculus; and on that of Rome, Gibbon's 15th chapter. On the later Judaic priestly finance see the references given as to the Jewish Twelve Apostles under ch. i. § 4. The process of growth of an order of "ethical lecturers" is indicated by C. Martha, *Les Moralistes sous l'empire romain*, 4e édit. 1881; also by E. Havet, *Le Christianisme et ses origines* (1872), tom. i. ch. iii. Compare Grote, *History of Greece*, end of ch. xlvi. and his *Plato and the Other Companions of Sokrates*, per index, as to the sophists. The financial side of the pagan mysteries is partly illustrated in the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius. Compare also Foucart, *Des Associations religieuses chez les Grecs*. Gibbon's fifteenth chapter deals in the main with a later period, but throws general light on this also. See also Renan's *Marc Aurèle*, ch. xxxi.; and especially Dr. Hatch's Hibbert Lectures, lect. iv., and Lecky's *History of European Morals*.

§ 3. *Organisation and Sacred Books.*

Dr. Hatch's *Organisation of the Early Christian Churches* recognises, on nominally orthodox principles, the fact that the structure was a natural adaptation to environment, on old type-lines. Of the movement of Apollonius of Tyana, a popular account is given by Professor A. Réville, *Apollonius of Tyana, the Pagan Christ of the Third Century*, Eng. tr. 1866; and a more judicial one by Baur in his *Drei Abhandlungen*. Of a perception of the dramatic origin of the

main parts of the Gospel narrative (discussed in the author's *Christianity and Mythology*, as above noted, and in art. "The Gospel Mystery Play" in the *Reformer*, November, 1901) there is as yet little or no trace in contemporary literature on Christian origins. See however Dr. Moncure Conway's *Solomon and Solomonic Literature* (Chicago, Open Court Pub. Co. 1899), p. 204, note; and compare Milman, *History of Christianity*, B. iv. ch. ii. To the old discussion on the supposed dramatic character of the Apocalypse the clues are given in Moses Stuart's *Commentary on the Apocalypse*. On the formation of the canon see the references to ch. i. § 1. As to Manichæism see those given below, ch. ii.

§ 4. *Concession and Fixation.*

On developments of doctrine in general the fullest modern treatise is Harnack's *History of Dogma* (Eng. tr. 1894, 6 vols.), but the critical student must revise many of Harnack's judgments. The same author's *Outlines of the History of Dogma* (Eng. tr. 1893) are at many points suggestive; and Hagenbach's *History of Dogma* is still useful. Hatch is well worth consulting in this connection.

§ 5. *Cosmic Philosophy.*

As to the fourth Gospel and the doctrine of the *Logos*, see the references given for ch. i. § 7; also the fourth and fifth chapters of Renan's *Les Evangiles*, which give his latest ideas on the problem; Reuss's *Histoire de la théologie chrétienne au siècle apostolique*, 2e édit. 1860, tom. ii. liv. vii.; and J. J. Tayler's treatise, *An Attempt to Ascertain the Character of the Fourth Gospel* (1867). Baur and Strauss may also be profitably studied.

PART II.—CHRISTIANITY FROM THE SECOND CENTURY TO THE RISE OF MOHAMMEDANISM.

CHAPTER I.—SCOPE AND CHARACTER OF THE UNESTABLISHED CHURCH.

§ 1. *Numbers and Inner Life.*

Gibbon's fifteenth chapter is still valuable here. Compare Hatch, *Organisation*, and Renan, *Saint Paul*, concluding chapter; and the church historians generally. As to Britain, see Wright's *The Roman*,

the Celt, and the Saxon, 4th ed. 1885. On the *personnel* and emotional life of the early church, compare Louis Ménard, *Etudes sur les origines du Christianisme*, 1893; Renan, *L'Eglise Chrétienne* and *Marc-Aurèle;* Tertullian, *passim;* J. A. Farrer, *Paganism and Christianity;* Dr. John Stoughton, *Ages of the Church* (pp. 42–43—orthodox admissions).

§ 2. *Growth of the Priesthood.*

Hatch, as before cited, is here a specially good guide; and Neander, *General History of the Christian Religion and Church* (trans. in Bohn Lib.) gives a copious narrative (vol. i. sect. ii.). On episcopal policy, compare the series of popular monographs under the title "The Fathers for English Readers" (S.P.C.K.) and the anonymous treatise *On the State of Man Subsequent to the Promulgation of Christianity* (1852), Part II. ch. iv. Mosheim (Reid's ed. of Murdock's trans.) deserves study. The question of priestly morals is handled in almost all histories of the Church. Cp. Gibbon, cc. xxi. xxv. xxxviii. Lea's *History of Sacerdotal Celibacy* (2nd ed. 1884) is a full and valuable record. As to the papacy, see references given below, Part III. ch. i. § 3.

§ 3. *The Gnostic Movement in the Second Century.*

Baur's *Die christiche Gnosis* (1835) remains the most comprehensive study of this subject; but Mr. C. W. King's *The Gnostics and their Remains* adds to his elucidations. Matter's *Histoire critique du Gnosticisme* (2e édit. 1843–4) remains worth study; as is Neander's general account of the Gnostic sects in vol. ii. of his *General History*. See shorter accounts in Baur's *Church History* (vol. i.), in Mosheim's, and in that of Jeremie (1855).

§ 4. *Marcionism and Montanism.*

Neander, Hatch, and Baur, as last cited, give good views. Tertullian, who wrote a treatise *Against Marcion*, and himself became a Montanist, is a primary authority.

§ 5. *Rites and Ceremonies.*

Bingham's *Christian Antiquities* (rep. 1855) gives abundant details; but see also Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*. Mosheim traces the development century by century.

§ 6. *Strifes over Primary Dogma.*

These may be followed in brief in Mosheim, or at length in Harnack's

History of Dogma, or in Hagenbach's earlier manual, which is more concise. Hatch's *Influence of Greek Ideas* is light-giving at some points; and Dr. Albert Réville's *Histoire du dogme de la divinité du Jesus Christ* (2e édit. 1876) is a good conspectus of its subject. For a briefer general view see Stoughton's *Ages of the Church*, Lect. v. and vii. The history of the so-called Apostles' Creed is fully discussed by M. Nicolas, *Le Symbole des Apôtres*, 1867, and in Harnack's work on the same subject (Eng. tr. 1901).

Chapter II.—RELATIONS OF CHURCH AND STATE.

§ 1. *Persecutions.*

Consult Gibbon, ch. xvi.; Niebuhr, *Lectures on Roman History*, Eng. tr. Lect. cxli.; and Boissier, *La Fin du Paganisme* (2e édit. 1894), tom i., Appendice, for critical views, as distinguished from those of the ecclesiastical historians. Compare also Milman's account, in the first chapter of his *History of Latin Christianity*. The alleged Neronian persecution is specially sifted by Hochart, *Études au sujet de la persécution des Chrétiens sous Néron*, 1885. For a complete record of the cult of the emperors see *Le Culte Impérial, son histoire et son organisation*, par l'Abbé E. Beurlier, 1891.

§§ 2, 3, 4 (see *Corrigenda*). *Establishment and Creed-Making; Reaction under Julian; Re-establishment; Disestablishment of Paganism.*

Boissier's *La Fin du Paganisme* goes very fully into the question of Constantine's conversion and policy, but does not supersede Beugnot, *Histoire de la destruction du paganisme en occident*, 1835, 2 tom. (Both are misleading on the subject of the *labarum*, as to which see the variorum notes in Reid's Mosheim, and in Bohn Gibbon, *ad loc.*) Compare Gibbon, cc. xix.–xxv., and Hatch, *Organisation*. Newman's *Arians of the Fourth Century* gives an intensely orthodox view of its subject. Mosheim and Milman and Neander are more judicial. See also Harnack's *Outlines*, and the references given above to ch. i. § 6. On Manichæism it is still well to consult Beausobre, *Histoire critique de Manichée et du Manichéisme*. Compare Mosheim, *Commentaries on the Affairs of the Christians*, vol. iii., and the account of Neander, *General History*, vol. ii. Rendall's *The Emperor Julian: Christianity and Paganism*, 1879, is a learned and competent research, usually fair, and gives light on the previous reigns, as well as on Julian's. Gibbon's survey here remains important. On Gregory of Nazianzun there is a monograph by Ullmann (Eng. tr. 1851). See Milman as to the falsity

of the death-legend concerning Julian. As to the disestablishment of paganism, Beugnot is the best guide, but Boissier is discursively instructive.

Chapter III.—FAILURE WITH SURVIVAL.

The narrative may be checked throughout by Neander's *General History of the Christian Religion and Church* (trans. in Bohn Lib.); by Mosheim, with the variorum notes of Reid's edition; by Gibbon's chapters; by the histories of dogma; by the above-cited monographs on the Fathers, *St. Chrysostom's Picture of his Age* (S.P.C.K. 1875), and Rev. W. R. Stephens' *St. Chrysostom, His Life and Times* (1872); by Milman's *History of Latin Christianity*, vols. i. and ii.; by Finlay's *History of Greece* (Tozer's ed.), vols. i. and ii.; and by Bury's *History of the later Roman Empire*. On the intellectual life compare further Boissier, *La Fin du Paganisme;* Ampère, *Histoire littéraire de la France*, 1839, tom. i. and ii.; and Lecky's *History of European Morals*.

Part III.—MEDIEVAL CHRISTIANITY.

Chapter I.—EXPANSION AND ORGANISATION.

§ 1. *Position in the Seventh Century.*

Hatch (*Organisation*) is still a guide. For special details consult Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*. Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* gives some specific ideas as to the early life of the medieval Church.

§ 2. *Methods of Expansion.*

Neander's *General History of the Christian Religion and Church*, Milman's *History of Latin Christianity*, Hardwick's *History of the Christian Church: Middle Age* (1853), and the variorum notes in Reid's Mosheim, give most of the documentary clues. But national histories should specially be consulted at this stage—*e.g.*, Crichton and Wheaton's *Scandinavia* (2nd ed. 1838, 2 vols.), Geijer's *History of Sweden* (Eng. tr. of first 3 vols. in 1, no date), Krasinski's *Sketch of the Religious History of the Slavonic Nations* (1851).

§ 3. *Growth of the Papacy.*

In addition to the general histories consult Gregorovius, *Geschichte der Stadt Rom* (Eng. trans. 2nd ed. 1901, in progress), and *The*

Pope and the Councils, by "Janus" (tr. 1869 from German). Hefele's *History of the Christian Councils* (Eng. tr., 1871–1896, 5 vols.), though by a Catholic scholar, is generally accepted as the standard modern work on its subject. Hallam's *View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages* is still valuable for its general views. Fuller details may be had from monographs on leading popes—*e.g.*, Voigt's *Hildebrand und sein Zeitalter* (French trans. by Abbé Jager, with added notes and documents, 1847) and Langeron's *Grégoire VII. et les origines de la doctrine ultramontaine* (1874). On the ancient Egyptian parallels see Maspero, *Histoire ancienne des peuples de l'orient.*

Chapter II.—RELIGIOUS EVOLUTION AND STRIFE.

Consult the ecclesiastical historians already cited, and compare R. L. Poole, *Illustrations of the History of Medieval Thought* (1884), as to Agobard and Claudius. For the special worships of Mary and Joseph, see the popular Catholic manual "The Glories of Mary," and P. Paul Barrie's "Glories of Joseph" (Eng. trans. Dublin, 1843 and later)—extracts in C. H. Collette's *Dr. Newman and his Religious Opinions*, 1866—also Newman's *Letter to Dr. Pusey*, as there cited. Sketches of the history of auricular confession are given in Rev. B.W. Savile's *Primitive and Catholic Faith*, 1875, ch. xiii., and in *Confession, a doctrinal and historical essay*, by L. Desanctis, Eng. tr. 1878; and sketches of the history of indulgences in Lea's *History of the Inquisition*, i. 41–47; De Potter's *Esprit de l'Eglise*, vii., 22–29; and Lea's *Studies in Church History*, 1869, p. 450. Of the Albigensian crusades a full narrative is given by Sismondi, *Histoire des Français*, tom. vi. and vii.—chapters collected and translated in Eng. vol., *History of the Crusades against the Albigenses* (1826). On the rationalistic heresies consult Ueberweg's *History of Philosophy*, Poole's *Illustrations of Medieval Thought*, and Renan's *Averroës et l'Averroïsme*. On the anti-clerical and anti-papal heresies compare Neander, Mosheim, Milman, Hardwick, and Poole. The fortunes of the Lollard movement are discussed in the author's *Dynamics of Religion.*

Chapter III.—THE SOCIAL LIFE AND STRUCTURE.

Of the historians cited in the last chapter, most are serviceable here. Consult in addition Lea's *Superstition and Force* (3rd ed. 1878), Berington's *Literary History of the Middle Ages*, Dunham's *Europe in the Middle Ages*, and Ampère's *Histoire Littéraire*, before cited. There are good lives of Savonarola by Perrens (French), and

Villari, Eng. trans. See also J. A. Symonds, *Renaissance in Italy: Age of the Despots.* On slavery compare Larroque, *De l'esclavage chez les nations chrétiennes* (2e édit, 1864); or see the author's *Introduction to English Politics*, per index. An excellent general view of the Crusades is given in the manual by Sir G. W. Cox ("Epochs of History" series). The latest expert survey of the subject is that of M. Seignobos, in the *Histoire générale* of MM. Lavisse and Rambaud.

Chapter IV.—THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE.

Again the same general authorities may be referred to, in particular Lea's *History of the Inquisition;* also White's *History of the Warfare of Science with Theology* (2 vols. 1896), Gebhart's *Les origines de la renaissance* (1879), Burckhardt's *Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy* (Eng. tr. in 1 vol. 1892), Buckle's *Introduction to the History of Civilisation in England*, Whewell's *History of the Inductive Sciences*, Baden Powell's *History of Natural Philosophy* (1834); and for the different countries their special histories. Draper's *Intellectual Development of Europe* is to be followed with caution. As to Gerbert, see the *Vie de Gerbert* of M. Olleris, 1867.

Chapter V.—BYZANTINE CHRISTIANITY.

Finlay's *History of (Modern) Greece* is the main authority in English apart from the ecclesiastical histories.

Part IV.—MODERN CHRISTIANITY.

Chapter I.—THE REFORMATION.

In addition to Neander; Mosheim; Milman's *History of Latin Christianity;* and Hardwick's *Church History; The Reformation* (rep. 1886), consult Ullmann's *Reformers before the Reformation* (Eng. tr. 2 vols. 1855), McCrie's *Histories of the Reformation in Spain and Italy*, Ranke's *History of the Reformation* and *History of the Popes* (Eng. tr.), Beard's Hibbert Lectures on the Reformation, Felice's *Histoire des Protestants de France* (trans. in Eng.), Krasinski's *History of the Reformation in Poland*, Professor H. M. Baird's *History of the Rise of the Huguenots*, 2 vols. 1880;

also the current Lives of the leading reformers, and the special histories of the nations. Creighton's *History of the Papacy during the Reformation* (6 vols.) has special merit as a fresh research. As to the witch-burning mania consult Lecky's *Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe*. On the Jesuists compare Nicollini's *History of the Jesuits*, 1853. On the medical work of Servetus and others see an interesting article by Dr. Austin Flint, in *New York Medical Journal*, June 29th, 1901.

Chapter II.—PROGRESS OF ANTI-CHRISTIAN THOUGHT.

As to the physical sciences, compare White, Baden Powell, Whewell, and Draper, as above cited, also Draper's *Conflict between Religion and Science* (Internat. Lib. of Science). On the development of philosophy, cosmic and moral, and of Biblical Criticism, see the references in the author's *Short History of Freethought*.

Chapter III.—POPULAR ACCEPTANCE.

For the history of Catholicism since the seventeenth century consult Mosheim and Neander, also the *History of the Fall of the Jesuits*, by Count A. de Saint-Priest (Eng. tr. 1845). There is an extensive literature on the controversy between Anglicanism and Catholicism in the middle of the nineteenth century, following on the Tractarian movement, as to the latest phases of which see the recent *Secret History of the Oxford Movement*, by Walter Walsh. For references as to recent developments in Protestant and other countries see again the author's *Short History of Freethought*. The fortunes of Greek Christianity may be traced through Finlay. Compare Villemain, *Essai sur l'état des Grecs depuis la conquête musulmane*, in his *Études d'histoire moderne* (nouv. ed. 1846). Concerning the state of religion in Russia, see Wallace's *Russia*. As to missions in general, see the able and comprehensive survey, *Foreign Missions*, by C. Cohen (Freethought Publishing Company).

PDF created by Rajesh Arya, Gujarat (20 Feb 2025)

INDEX.

Abailard, 245, 250, 285
Aboubekr, 300
Abraham, 24, 25, 29, 45
Absolution, 239
Abyssinia, Christianity in, 205, 261
Acts, book of, 7, 9, 17, 31, 34
Adalbert, St., 272
Adelhard, 293
Adonis, 9, 23, 44, 45, 63, 65–66
Æons, Gnostic, 115
Aërius, 183
Æsculapius, 43, 197
Agapæ, 24–25, 80, 238
Agni, 69
Agobard, 233, 243
Alaric, 176, 177
Albert, Archbishop, 313
Albigensian crusades, 226, 242, 252–4, 265
Alcuin, 211, 292
Alexander, 134
—— III. (Pope), 286
Alexandria, 50, 115, 146, 192
Algebra, 294
Alphonso of Castile, 294
Alva, 319
Amalrich of Bena, 246
Ambrose, 108, 168, 169, 170, 181, 192, 193, 196, 240
Ammon, 27, 189, 228
Anabaptist movement, 324–5, 335, 336
Ananias and Sapphira, 31
Anastasius, 162
Andronicus, 305
Angels, worship of, 120
Angli, conversion of, 209
Anglicanism, 372
Animal-worship, 92
Anselm, 245
Anthropomorphites, 232
Antinomianism, 81, 102, 116
Antioch, church of, 98, 128, 160
Antipodes, doctrine of, 245
Anti-Semitism, 394
Antonines, the, 162, 197, 204. *See* Marcus Aurelius
Aphroditê, 65, 66
Apocalypse, 17, 26, 31, 33, 71, 111, 131
Apocrypha, the Christian, 13, 44
Apollinaris, heresy of, 183–185
Apollo, 10, 12, 43, 44, 68, 126
Apollonius of Tyana, 35, 86, 194
Apostles, myth of twelve, 3, 17–21, 32; the real, 19, 100
—— Jewish, 18, 83
—— Creed, 221
Apostolical Constitutions, 221–2
Apostolici, 251
Arabia, Christianity in, 99, 181 203
Arabic science, 293–4
Arbogastes, 173
Arcadius, 176
Archipresbyters, 207
Architecture, Christian, 202, 297–8
Ardeshir, 164
Aries, constellation of, 72
Aristotle, study of, 246, 293, 296
Arithmetic, introduction of, 293
Arius and Arianism, 149, 151, 156–7, 166, 167, 169, 176–181, 185, 217
Armenia, conversion of, 157
—— Nestorians in, 57; heresy in, 248–9
Arminianism, 337
Arnobius, 104
Arnold of Brescia, 250

Arnold of Cliteaux, 253
—— Matthew, 372
Arrius Antoninus, 135–6
Art, effects of religion on, 202, 203, 296–8
Ascetic ideals, 45, 66, 68, 73, 77, 80, 102, 122, 181, 193, 194, 203, 387
Asses, the two mythic, 43
Astrology, 349
Astruc, 359
Astronomical myths, 26, 44; science, 245
Athanasius and Athanasianism, 149–151, 155, 156, 161, 166, 180
Atheism, 336
Athenagoras, 41
Athens, religion in, 53, 130, 194, 381
Attis, 9, 23, 37, 38, 44, 45, 63–65
Audæans, 232
Augsburg, confession of, 326, 334
Augurs, 171
Augustine, St., 117, 170, 173, 182, 191, 194, 195–6, 233, 234, 236, 240
—— the lesser, 204, 205, 209, 210
Augustus, 134, 269
Aurelian, 128, 140
Austria, religion in, 367, 376
Averroës and Averroism, 246, 294

Babe-God, 44, 67, 69
Babylonian religion, 44, 45
Bacchus, 25, 38, 67–69, 171. *See* Dionysos
Bacon, Roger, 257
—— Francis, 344, 349, 350, 351
Bangor, massacre at, 210
Banquets, religious, 22–30
Baptism, 30, 53, 124, 143, 148, 240, 248
Barabbas, 45
Barbarism, Christianity and, 206, 209
Bardesanes, 113, 114, 120
Bartholomew, Massacre of St., 323
Basil, 193, 200, 218
Basilides, 114, 116
Beghards, 255, 266, 284
Beguins, 255, 266, 284
Belgium, religion in, 366
Belisarius, 178
Benedict II. (Pope), 219
Benedictines, 261
Berengar, 244
Berkeley, 355
Berlin, 321
Bernard, St., 285
Berne, 370
Bethlehem birth-myth, 11, 97
Bible, use of in early Church, 86, 91; translations of, 312
—— the "Rainbow," 373
Biblical criticism, 356–361
Bibliolatry, 339
Bishops, 54, 84, 105–7, 110, 144–5, 147; and papacy, 221–2; and feudal powers, 222
Black Death, the, 280, 288
Black Madonnas, 231
Blood covenant, 23
Bodin, 340, 349, 352
Boethius, 196, 292
Bogomilians, 240
Bohemia, conversion of, 213; heresy in, 309; Protestantism in, 327; reversion of, 328
Bohemond, 275
Boleslavs, the two, 213
Bonaventura, St., 235
Bonaventure des Periers, 344
Boniface, 210, 245
—— III. (Pope), 219
Bossuet, 362
Bougre, the name, 249
Boyle, 352
Bradlaugh, 374
Brahmanism, 163
Brazil, religion in, 367
Brethren of the Free Spirit, 255, 311
—— of the Common Lot, 255, 311
Britain, ancient, Christianity in, 99
Bruno, Giordano, 345, 348, 354
—— St., 260
Büchner, 356
Buddha and Buddhism, 2, 8, 17, 163
Bulgaria, Turkish conquest of, 215; heresy in, 249
Bull-symbol, 72
Butler, 355

Byzantium, 186, 198–204, 261, 277, 292, 296, 297, 298, 299–307, 376

Calendar, the ecclesiastical, 171
Calvin and Calvinism, 267, 312, 323, 334, 336–7
Cannibalism, religious, 29
Canon, formation of, 120
Canons regular, 207
Canute. *See* Knut
Capital and labour, 398
Caputiati, 251
Cardinals, powers of, 223
Carlstadt, 325
Carpocrates, 116
Carthage, church of, 143
Cassiodorus, 291
Catechumens, 117, 125
Cathari, 249
Cathedrals, 207
Catholicism, latter-day, 354, 362
Cave-birth-myth, 44
Celibacy, doctrine of, 77, 109–110, 193, 206, 224
Celsus, 13, 104
Cephas, 20. *See* Peter
Cerdo, 114
Ceres, 25, 68. See *Dêmêtêr*
Cetewayo, 216
Chalcedon, Council of, 185, 218
"Chapters," powers of, 223, 225
Charlemagne, 210, 212, 220
Charles Martel, 219
—— the Bald, 243
—— the Fat, 221
—— V., 315, 320, 322, 326
Charron, 354
Chartreuse, monks of, 260
Chateaubrand, 359
Chaucer, 257
Chazari, 249
Chemistry, rise of, 293
Child-eating, charge of, 29–30
Child-God, the, 44, 69
China, ethics in, 74; Christianity in, 363–4
Chorepiscopi, 206
Chrēstos, the name, 36, 39–41
Christ, the name, 2; the myth, 32–48, 87, 95; the doctrine, 95–97, 112–116, 120, 121, 126–8, 149–153, 184–193, 305
Christian III. of Denmark, 319
—— IV. of Denmark, 328
—— of Anhalt, 327
Christians, the first, 3–12, 58, 76, 80, 83, 98–104, 132
Christmas, 15–16, 44
Chrysostom, 193–200
Church, origin of Christian, 54, 58, 82, 86–97, 98–111; State establishment of, 138–157; early endowments of, 143–4, 155, 209; organisation of, 206–8, 217–229; expansion of, 209–16; slave-holding by, 271
Claudian, 195–6
Claudius, Bishop, 233, 243
Clement of Alexandria, 94, 103, 117
—— of Rome, 4–5, 89
—— III. (antipope), 224
—— VII. (Pope), 317
Clementines, the, 33
Clergy, early Christian, 103, 105, 139, 143–5, 146–57; celibacy of, 109–10, 224–26, 257–9; ignorance of, 257; misconduct of, 258; influences of, 257, 262–4; modern Greek, 377–8; Russian, 382–3
Clifford, 372
Clovis, 178
Coelestius, 182
Colenso, 360
Coleridge, 127, 356
Collins, Anthony, 358
Collyridians, 181
Columbus, 347
Communism, alleged Christian, 31
Concord, ideal of, 77
Condorcet, 353
Confession, sacerdotal, 239–240
Constance, Council of, 309
Constans, 150, 154
—— II., 150, 187
Constantine, 141–150, 159, 269–270
—— II., 150, 187
—— VI., 220
—— Copronymus, 249
—— the Paulician, 248
Constantius, 153–159
—— Chlorus, 138, 141, 142, 159

Constantinople, ancient church of, 143, 145; Council of, 185; life of, 198, 304; patriarch of, 148, 216, 218, 219; fall of, 295, 306, 376
Conversion of barbarians, 209–216
Copernicus, 334, 347, 348
Corinthians, Epistles to, 5, 17, 22
Corybantic mysteries, 68
Cosmas Indicopleustes, 197
Cossacks, creed of, 331
Councils, church, 82, 110, 128, 146, 149, 185, 228, 342
Creeds, use of, 124
Crete, Moslem conquest of, 306; re-conquest of, 307
Crime, Christianity and, 387–8
Crispus, 145
Cross-symbol, 31–32, 37, 69, 71, 124, 125
Crucifix, the, 32
Crucifixion, mystic, 32, 37–38
—— mythic, 45
Cruelty, Christian and Pagan, 133, 191, 192, 194, 214, 216, 226, 249, 253–4, 261, 263–4, 274–6, 388
Crusades, 227, 241, 273–280
Culture-conditions, Greco-Roman, 50–1; medieval, 257–273, 308–313
Cumberland, 354
Cybelê, 63, 64
Cyprian. 104, 110, 133, 217
Cyril, 192

D'Alembert, 353
Damasus, Pope, 167, 217
Dancers, sects of, 284, 383
Dante, 295
Daniel, myth of, 45
Darwinism, 353, 372
David, 45
—— of Dinant, 246
Decadence, ancient, promoted by Christianity, 103, 145, 146, 150, 151, 162, 173–4, 176, 177, 181, 186, 192–204, 218
Decius, 133
Decretals, the forged, 222, 225
Deism, 245, 352–3, 357–8
Delambre, 353
Dêmêtêr, 9, 67, 69, 92
Deogratius, 192
Descartes, 350–2, 354
Devil, belief in, 283
D'Holbach, 353
Diderot, 353
Diocletian, 133, 136–8, 140
Dionysius the Areopagite, 303
Dionysos, cult of, 17, 23, 24, 29, 38, 43, 44, 45, 53, 67–69, 126, 130, 171
Disciples. *See* Apostles
Divination, 166
Docetists, 152, 248
Dogma, formation of, 185–6, 228
Dominicans, 235, 287
Donatists, 152, 177, 247
Dolcino, Fra, 251
Doomsday, doctrine of, 30, 46, 85
Dositheus, 43
Dostoyevsky, 383
Drama, Greek, 50
Dreyfus case, 394
Druids, 29, 228
Dukhobortoi, 384
Dynamis, 115

Education, pagan and Christian, 196–7, 292–4; in fifteenth century, 311; Jesuit methods of, 345–6; modern Catholic, 367
Ebionites, 6–12
Ecclesiasticus, book of, 23
Eckhart, 266
Economic causation, 32, 80–86, 95, 105, 146, 164, 166–7, 168, 173, 174, 194, 207–8, 237, 297, 330, 367, 392, 397
Egypt, ancient cults of, 151, 186, 189, 228 (*see* Isis and Osiris); Christianity in, 99, 151, 171, 205; Gnosticism in, 114–116
El, 24, 25, 45
Elcesaites, 42, 111–112
Eleusinian mysteries, 166, 177
Elijah and Elisha, 45
Elizabeth of England, 317, 342–3
Elvira, council of, 233
Emerson, 373
Emperors, worship of, 135
Encyclopædia Biblica, 361

England, Christianity in, 209; heresy in medieval, 254; slave-trading in, 272; Protestantism in, 332–3, 346; rationalism in, 371–2
End of world, doctrine of, 30, 46, 85
Ennoia, 115
Ephesus, council of, 185
Epictetus, 103, 104, 161, 265
Epicureanism, 158
Epiphanius, 233, 234
Erasmus, 312, 341
Erigena. *See* John the Scot
Essenes, 60–62
Eternal Gospel, The, 255
Ethics, Christian and pagan, 47, 73–78, 79, 101, 109–110, 191–204; 385–390
Eucharist, 3, 22–30, 86, 87, 124, 125; doctrine of, 236–9, 243–4, 248
Eudo of Stello, 250
Eugenius, 169
Eusebius, 100, 133, 140, 144
Eustathius, 303
Eutyches, heresy of, 185, 187
Exarchs, 148
Exorcism, Christian, 85, 101, 125, 197

Fanaticism, 64, 77, 135, 137, 154, 172, 332, 336
Faraday, 391
Fausta, 145
Fénelon, 362
Ferdinand I., 342
Feudalism, Christianity and, 268–273
Feuerbach, 264
Fichte, 355
Filioque clause, 189
Finance, early Christian, 32; modern, 392, 398. *See* Papacy
Finlay, cited, 304, 377
Finns, conversion of, 214
Flagellants, 283–4, 384
Florence, religion at, 245, 267
Forgery, Christian, 5, 94, 108, 222
Fox George, 347
France, heresy in, 287; Reformation in, 312–313, 320–3; decline of Protestantism in, 321–2, 375–6; rationalism in, 339, 344, 359, 366, 375–6
Francis I., 321
Francis, St., of Assisi, 254, 264–5
—— of Sales, 264
Franciscans, 215, 255, 309, 345
Franklin, 373
Franks, religion of the, 178
Fraticelli, 255, 309
Frauds, early Christian, 5, 94, 107–108; medieval, 221–2
Frederick Barbarossa, 251
—— II., 295
—— of Saxony, 315, 325
—— Elector Palatine, 328
Freemasonry, 298
French Revolution, reaction against, 353, 365, 375; effect of in Greece, 381; bloodshed in, 386
Friars, preaching, 227, 254, 261
"Friends of God," 266

Galatians, Epistle to the, 19, 37
Galerius, 136, 137, 138, 141
"Galileans," 10
Galileo, 345, 347, 349, 351
Galli, 64
Gallus, 153
Gassendi, 351, 352
Gaul, Christianity in, 99, 178, 193–4, 206, 209
Geneva, religion in, 313, 323, 335
Gentile Christism, 32–46
Geology, 353
Gerbert, 273, 293
Gerhard of Cambrai, 253
Germany, rationalism in, 359, 360, 370
Gerson, 235–6
Gibbon, 358
Gladiatorial games, 193–4
Glanvil, 352
Glossolalia, 78, 106
Gnosticism, 34, 35, 47, 78, 93–9, 102, 111–119, 152
Goat-God, the, 44
Goch, John of, 310
Godfrey of Bouillon, 275

Goethe, 341
Goliards, 252
Goths, religion of, 176–7
Gottschalk the Wend, 214
—— the monk, 243, 247
Gospels, date of, 4, 12; composition of, 86–91, 95–97
Gratian, 167–8, 270
—— the monk, 225
Greece, priesthoods of pagan, 82; life of Christian, 376–382, 395–6
Greek life and culture (ancient), 49–56, 99, 102, 124, 203–4; medieval, 297–307; modern, 376–382, 395–6
—— and Latin schism, 302–307
Gregory Thaumaturgus, 108
—— of Nazianzun, 157, 160
—— the Great (Pope), 197, 200, 202, 204, 205, 218–219, 232, 237, 240, 241, 282, 292
—— II. (Pope), 219
—— IV. (Pope), 221
—— VII. (Pope), 223–5, 244
—— IX. (Pope), 254, 287
—— XI. (Pope), 227
Guelphs and Ghibelines, 273
Gustavus Adolphus, 328
—— Vasa, 319

Hades, descent into, 69; idea of, 76, 119
Hadrian, 141
Halley, 352
Haroun Abraschid, 220
Harpocrates, 70
Harvey, 350
Hebrews, early beliefs of, 24, 29, 37, 45
Hegel, 355
Helena, 231
Hell, doctrine of, 76, 119
Hellenistic religion, 37
Henri IV., 323
Henry III. (emperor), 223
—— IV. (emperor), 224–5
—— the monk, 250
—— V. of England, 256
—— VIII. of England, 317
Heraclius, 187, 192, 209
Herbert of Cherbury, 357
Hercules (Herakles), 2, 24, 69, 126
Heresy, ancient, 111–119, 128–9, 147, 178, 182–190; medieval, 256; rationalistic, 243–7; anti-clerical, 247–256
Hermas, the *Pastor* of, 42
Hermes, 39, 44, 46, 69, 96
Hero-worship, Greek, 40, 170–1
Hierapolis, Goddess of, 66
Hincmar, 243
Hildebrand, 223, 224, 225, 244
Hobbes, 355, 357
Holland, art in, 297; Protestantism in, 319, 337, 345; rationalism in, 354, 371
Holy Ghost, doctrine of, 151
—— Roman Empire, 220, 229
—— *Spirit, Gospel of the*, 255
Homoousian dispute, 149–50
Honorius, 176, 177, 194
Horos, 44, 45, 69–70, 115
Huguenots, the, 313, 322–3, 331–2
Hume, 355, 368
Hungary, conversion of, 214
Huss, 309–310
Huxley, 372
Hypatia, 192, 200

Iconoclasts, the, 233–4, 301, 304
Icons, 203, 231–4, 382
Idolatry, early Christian aversion to, 102, 131; later Christian practice of, 175, 203, 230–234, 301, 382
Ignatius, Epistles of, 3, 4, 6; character of, 100
Imitatio Christi, the, 104, 264
Immortality, doctrine of, 39, 71–72, 76, 245
Imperialism, Roman, 49, 103, 104, 135, 157–8, 174, 229
Impostors, The Three, 295
Incarnation, 56
Index Expurgatorius, 345
India, religions of, 73; Christianity in, 363–4
Indulgences, doctrine of, 240–2, 253; traffic in, 313–4
"Incorruptibilist" controversy, 190
Infant-damnation, doctrine of, 76
Infallibility, Papal, 228, 367
Ingersoll, 374
Innocent III. (Pope), 242, 253, 277

Innocents, massacre of, 45
Inquisition, the, 285–291, 322, 338–9
Inspiration, 47–8, 75–8, 93, 121, 347, 386
Ireland, Christianisation of, 205, 209; decivilisation of, 329, 333, 365, 394–5
Irene, 220
Isaac, 24, 29
Isidorean decretals, the, 222, 225
—— Encyclopedia, 291
Isis, cult of, 39, 44, 69, 70, 92–3, 130, 231
Italy under Christianity, 173, 176, 178, 221, 246, 287, 295; rationalism in, 339, 344, 349, 365

Jacobites, sect of, 186
James V. of Scotland, 318
—— I. of England, 328, 339, 340
—— II. of England, 332–3
Jansenists, 351
Japan, Christianity in, 363
Jasion, 68
Jefferson, 373
Jehovah, 24
Jerome, 174, 181, 191, 193, 199
—— of Prague, 310
Jerusalem, Jesuist life in, 31, 57; patriarchate of, 218; capture of by the Crusaders, 275–6
Jesseans, 10
Jesuits, in Poland, 331, 345; success of, 345, 362–3; decline of, 364–5
Jesus, mythic personality of, 12–17, 23, 33, 35, 37–38, 42, 43–48, 77, 87–89, 95–97, 126–9, 149–151, 183–190
—— and Jesuism, 2, 7–11, 19, 125, 183, 185. *See* Christ.
—— the high-priest, 9
—— Ben Pandira, 8, 14
Jews, variant beliefs of, 6; poverty of, 8; after fall of Temple, 18; mysteries of, 22–26; and Christians, 33–34, 44–45, 56–59; persecutions of by Christians, 193, 209, 274, 289, 337; as slave-dealers, 272; in Turkey, 379
Joachim of Flora, 255
John, gospel of, 14, 46, 77, 95-97
—— epistles of, 21
—— the Baptist, 30, 33, 58
—— VIII. (Pope), 221
—— the Scot, 243–4, 246, 264, 293, 303
—— of Parma, 255
Joseph, 45; cult of, 235–6
Joshua, 7, 9, 15, 22
Joule, 391
Jovian, 165
Jovinian, 181
Judaism, 7, 9, 18, 37, 56–59, 85, 164
Judas, 21, 32
Judges, book of, 3
Julian, 153, 157–165
—— Saint, 219, 276
Julius Cæsar, 134, 158
Jumpers, sect of, 383
Jupiter, 44
Justin Martyr, 3, 90, 99, 103, 126
Justinian, 186, 199, 270, 271; code of, 292
——II., 300
Juvenal, 75, 231

Kant, 355
Kelvin, 391
Kepler, 347, 352
Khonsu, 189, 229
"Kingdom of God," 33, 46, 47
Knights Templars, 260, 280,
——Teutonic order of, 214
Knox, John, 318
Knut, 212
Kriobolium, 72
Krishna, 2, 17, 24
Kronos, 24

Labarum, the, 142
Lagrange, 353
Lalande, 353
Lamb, sacrament of, 25–27, 29, 72, 92, 183
La Mettrie, 353
Laplace, 353
Languedoc, heresy in, 252
Lares and *Penates*, 52–3
Las Casas, 216
Laski, John, 336
Laurentius Valla, 311

Lecky, 372
Leibnitz, 352
Leo I. (Pope), 192, 219, 238
—— X. (Pope), 313, 317
—— the Isaurian, 233–4, 300–1
—— the Armenian, 249, 301, 302
Lepers, 263
Liber and Libera, 68, 69
Licinius, 141–2, 145
Lithuania, paganism of, 215
Lituus, the, 171
Livonia, Christianity in, 214
Logos, doctrine of, 41, 46, 95–97, 115, 126, 128
Lollardism, 255–6, 309
Lombards, the, 178, 219
Lord's Prayer, the, 75, 125
Louis, son of Charlemagne, 220–1, 303
—— St., 266
—— XII., 322
—— XIV., 332
Lubeck, paganism of, 214
Lucian, 104
Lucretius, 158
Luther, 311, 312–315, 324–5, 334, 337, 339, 349
Lutheranism, 326–8, 330, 335–7, 342

Macarius, 244
Macedonius, 156
Macrobius, 161
Magnentius, 153
Maia, 46
Manger-basket, the, 44
Manichæism, 68, 91, 119, 123, 152–3, 168, 177, 178, 179, 180, 192, 194, 241, 247. *See* Paulicians
Mansfeld, 328
Manuel Comnenus, 305
Marcian, 162
Marcion and Marcionism, 119–121, 179
Marcus Aurelius, 104, 132, 157, 162, 265
Marnas, 23
Marsyas, 44
Martianus Capella, 291
Martin of Tours, 170
Martyrs, 100–101, 135; spurious, 171; heretical, 156
Mary, myth and cult of, 15, 44, 181, 184, 231, 234–5
—— Queen of England, 317
—— ,, ,, Scotland, 318
—— Regent ,, ,, 318
Mass, the, 238–9
Massacres, Christian, 156, 192, 210, 226, 249, 253–4, 274–5, 322, 323
Maternus, 154
Matthew, gospel of, 11
—— of Cracow, 309
Maxentius, 139, 141, 142
Maximian, 137, 141
Maximin, 139
Maximinus, 133
Maximus, 168
Maximilian, 327–8
Mazdeism, 46, 61, 71, 114, 152, 164, 248
Mediator, the, 46, 189, 289
Medicine, ancient and modern, 197, 343, 350
Melanchthon, 334, 349
Melchizedek, 25
Menander, 40
Messiah, doctrine of, 2, 9, 10, 11, 14, 24, 36, 45, 57
Mexicans, religion of early, 29, 73, 109; slaughter of, 216
Michael the Drunkard, 302
—— the Stammerer, 303
Middleton, 358
Midnight worship, 132, 148
Mill, J. S., 385
Milman, 204
Miracles, 13, 35, 43, 107–8, 232, 237, 281
Miriam, 15
Missionaries, Catholic, 362–4; Protestant, 374–5
Mithra and Mithraism, 9, 23, 24, 27, 43, 46, 63, 70–73, 81, 96, 99, 132, 152, 171, 218
Moawyah, Caliph, 300
Mohammedanism, rise of, 1, 186–7, 200–2, 205; influence of, 202, 232, 246, 248; Christian converts to, 306, 377
Moleschott, 356
Molokani, 383
Monarchy, Christianity and, 179, 209–214

Monasticism, 199–200, 222, 259–260
Mongols, tolerance of, 215
Monophysite heresy, 179, 185, 187, 190, 378, 383
Monotheism, pagan, 151, 159; and science, 391
Monothelite heresy, 187
Montaigne, 340, 341, 354
Montanus and Montanism, 79, 120–123, 137, 153, 179
Moors, persecution of, 215, 242, 288, 289
Morone, 342
Moses, 2, 9, 45
Mosheim, 171
Mother-Goddesses, 44, 70, 99, 184, 231
Münzer, 325
Myrrha, 63
Mystæ, 39, 64
Mysteries, Jewish, 22, 23
—— pagan, 24, 25, 27, 29, 43, 64–66, 124, 238
—— Christian, 22–32, 39, 64, 124
Mystery-play, the primary, 21, 33, 80, 87, 107
Myth in history and religion, 1–2

Nantes, Edict of, 323; revoked, 332
Nazara or Nazareth, 7, 11
Nazarites and Nazarenes, 6–12, 57
Narses, 178, 190
Netherlands. *See* Holland
Neo-Platonism, 136
Nero, 36
Nestorians, 57, 164, 179, 184–5, 187, 201
Nestorius, 183–5
Netzer, 7, 9
Newman, Cardinal, 235, 366
Newton, 352
Nicephorus I., 249, 301
Nicæa, Council of, 148–9, 185
Nicholas I. (Pope), 222
—— II. (Pope), 223
—— IV. (Pope), 277
Nicodemus, Gospel of, 90
Nicolaus of Anthicuria, 245
—— of Cusa, 245
Nicolitaines, 111
Noëtus, 126
Nominalism, 244, 310
Nous, 115
Novatian and Novatians, 110, 184

Old Testament, analysis of, 3; early Christian use of, 4, 86–91. *See* Bible
Olympius, 177
Onuphrius, St., 171
Origen, 13, 76, 104, 117, 186, 191, 194, 200, 240
Orpheus and Orphic cults, 39, 68
Osiris and Osirianism, 2, 32, 38, 39, 41, 69–71, 171
Otho, St., 214
Oxford movement, 367

Paganism, ethics of, 16, 73–78; sacraments and mysteries of, 22, 25, 32, 63–73; theology of, 24, 96; relation of to Christianity, 29, 39, 43–44, 79–81, 91–92, 99, 104, 130–140, 147, 162–3, 169–175, 180; disestablishment of, 144, 154–5, 169, 171, 172–4; persecution of, 153–5, 169; persistence of, 177, 205
Paley, 356
Paine, 358, 373
Pan, 44
Pantheism, 354
"Papa," 64, 218
Papacy, growth of, 110, 171, 216–229; disorders of, 222–3, 225; hostility to, 221, 226, 227; strength of, 227, 247; revenues of, 225, 227, 313; attitude of to Protestantism, 315; incapable of economic reform, 341–2; present position of, 366
Papias, 100
"Parasites," 53
Paris, university of, 246
Pasagini, 251
Paschal controversy, 27–28
Paschasius Radbert, 242
Passion-play. *See* Mystery-play
Passover, the, 8, 25, 26
Pasteur, 391

Pastor, the, of Hermas, 42
Paterini, 252
Patriarchates, the five, 148, 218
Patripassians, 126–7
Paul, 2, 3, 32, 34; and Jesus, 5, 13, 27, 37–38, 74, 77
—— of Samosata, 128, 140, 183
—— IV. (Pope), 322
Paulicians, the, 248–256, 286, 301
Pauline epistles, 2–6, 17, 19, 22, 31, 37, 74, 77, 89, 93, 94, 95, 100, 116, 268
—— theology, 75, 112
Paulinus, 195, 199
Peasants' War, 325
Pelagius and Pelagianism, 182–3
Pentateuch, 3; influence of, 338; criticism of, 360
Persecutions of Christians, 36, 101, 130–140, 201; of pagans, 154–5, 169; of heretics, 168, 177, 179–190, 226, 242, 252–4, 265, 322, 333; by Protestants, 336–7
Persephone, 67
Pepin, 219
Persia, Christianity in, 98, 164, 184, 205
Peru, conquest of, 216
Peter, myth of, 20, 33, 34, 71, 88, 217
—— Waldus, 252
—— the Hermit, 274
Peter, Gospel of, 21
Petrarch, 312
Petrobrussians, 250
Pharisees, 7, 56
Philip II., 320
Philo, 46, 74, 94, 96
Phocas, 192, 219
Phoenician religion, 24, 25, 29
Photinus, 167
Photius, 302–3
Phronesis, 115
Phrygia, cults of, 63–64, 68
Pilate, 33, 88
Plato and Platonism, 46, 116
Pliny junior, 132
Plotinus, 104
Plutarch, 103, 104
Poland, conversion of, 213; Reformation in, 322; recaptured by Rome, 330–1, 336, 345
Polycarp, epistles of, 4; character of, 100
Polygamy, 202
Polytheism, Christian, 184, 232–6
Pomeranians, conversion of, 214
Pontifex Maximus, Christian emperors as, 143, 145, 168
Poor, religious movements of, 8, 44, 54, 56; in Christian Church, 85. *See* Poverty
Pope, the name, 218
Porphyry, 104
Poseidon, 43
Positivism, 367
Poverty, ancient and modern, 85
—— Christianity and, 387
Praetextatus, 167
Prayers for the dead, 85
Praxeas, 126, 183
Predestinarianism, 243, 247, 342
Presbyterianism, 368–9
Presbyters, 54, 84, 105
Priesthoods, ancient wealth of, 82
Priesthood, Christian, morals of, 109–110; growth of, 105–111, 143–8, 216–229; avarice of, 144, 166, 211
Priestley, 358
Priscillian, 168, 179
Progress, Christianity and, 396–9. *See* Decadence
Propaganda, Catholic College of, 363
Prophets, Christian, 93, 106
Proserpine, 68
Proselytes, Jewish, 22, 41
Protestantism, effects of, on civilisation, 336, 340, 346; later position of, 368–376
Protestants, name, 326; movement, 308–333; sects of, 335, 346; missions of, 374–5
Provence, heresy in, 252–4
Prudentius, 195
Psyche, myth of, 39
"Publicans and sinners," 45, 55
Pulci, 245
Purgatory, 153, 240
Puritanism, 338
Pythagoras and Pythagoreanism, 31, 61

Quadrivium, 291
Quakers, 347, 389

Rabelais, 344
Race, theory of, 288, 333
Ranke, 341
Rationalism, rise and growth of, 243–7, 282, 287, 340–1, 344, 348–361
Ratramnus, 243–4, 282
Raymond of Toulouse, 252–3
Realism, 310
Reformation, the, 242, 308–333; political results of, 324–333; intellectual results, 333–347
Regiomontanus, 295
Relics, adoration of, 108, 241, 283
Religion, conditions of evolution of, 50–56, 396–9
Remi, St., 293
Renaissance, the, 246, 281, 287
Renan, 361
Resurrection myth, 43, 64, 65, 67, 69, 71
Reuchlin, 312
Revelation, book of, 17, 26, 31, 33
Rhadagast, 176
Rhea-Cybele, 92
Rhetoric, pagan and Christian, 195
Richelieu, 329, 331–2
Rimini, Council of, 156
Ritual, growth of, 124–5, 170, 238
Robert Guiscard, 225
Rock, the Mithraic, 71
Roman Empire, 49–56, 85; spread of Christianity in, 99
Rome, pagan cults of, 64, 68–69, 130; pagan priesthoods of, 82, 84; early church of, 101, 110; life of, under Christianity, 204, 217; sack of, 316; aspects of, under Papacy, 341–2
Romuald, St., 283
Roscellinus, 244
Royal Society, 350, 352
Russia, conversion of, 213; influence of in Greece, 380, 381; religion in, 382–4

Sabazios, cult of, 68
Sabellius and Sabellianism, 126–7, 149, 183
Sacæa, the, 45
Sacraments, pagan, 23–25, 29, 30, 37, 52, 53, 67, 68, 70; the four Christian, 240
Sacrifices, 22, 24, 25, 73
Sadducees, 7
Sagarelli, 251
Saint-Simon, 366
Salvation Army, 372
Salvian, 193
Samaritan religion, 6, 33
—— elements in Christianity, 6, 34, 45, 47, 112
Samothracian Gods, 39
Samson, 15, 33
Saracens. *See* Moors and Mohammedanism
Sarpi, 362
Sassanides, the, 164
Sa an, 113
Saturn, 24
Saturninus, 113
Saviour-Gods, 63–73
Savonarola, 267, 311
Saxons, conversion of, 210–211
Scandinavia, conversion of, 211–214; Protestantism in, 319; rationalism in, 370
Scholarship, promoted by Church in Renaissance, 295; later revival of, 311–312
Science, Greek, 51, 146, 196–7; revival of, 245, 293–4, 348–354; and religion, 391, 393
Scotland, Reformation in, 318, 343, 368–370
Scot, Reginald, 340
"Seal of God," 31
Secular clergy, rise of, 208
Selenus, Bishop, 232
Semelê, 67
Semitic religion, 15, 22, 37
Seneca, 74, 269
Sepulchre, the Holy, 380
Serapis, 41, 130
Sergius, 249
Sermon on the Mount, 8, 16
Servetus, 127, 337, 343
Servia, conversion of, 213
Seven, banquet of, 43
Severus, 133
Shaftesbury, 355

Shakespeare, 344
Shepherd, the Good, 39
Shew-bread, 25
Sibylline books, 108
Sicily, Moslem conquest of, 306
Silenus, 44
Simon De Montfort, 253–4
Simon Magus, 33–34, 43, 112
Simony, 225, 378
Sixtus V. (Pope), 341
Slavery, 74, 194, 202, 268–272, 277, 306
Slaves, in early cults, 52, 53, 55; in Christian Church, 80, 271
Slavs, conversion of, 213, 215; invasion of Byzantium by, 303
Smith, Adam, 355, 368
Socinus and Socinianism, 336
Socialism, 367, 398
Sons, sacrifices of, 24, 45
Sophia, 46, 115
Sorbonne, the, 321, 333
Sorcery, 283, 284
Spain, religion in, 178, 179, 209, 215, 234; inquisition in, 288–291; ruin of, 289; rationalism in, 366
Spencer, 356
Spires, Diets of, 325–6
Spirit, the Holy, 44
Spinoza, 354
Stable-birth myth, 44
Stephen, the boy crusader, 277
Stercoranism, 282
Stilicho, 176, 177
Stoicism, 74–75, 159, 162, 265
Strauss, 360
Suetonius, 36
Suidas, 303
Sulpicius Severus, 36
Sun-myth, 15, 25, 26, 70
Sun-day, 71, 148
Superstition, Christian, 101, 131, 281–5, 306
Supper, Holy. *See* Eucharist
Switzerland, Reformation in, 316, 333, 334–5, 368–370
Sylvanus, 248
Sylvester II. (Pope), 273, 293
Symbols, sacrificial, 29–30
Synods, 82
Syria, cults of, 66; Gnostics in, 113
Tabitha and Talitha, 35
Tacitus, 36
Tammuz, 65
Tanquelin, 250
Tatian, 113, 114
Tau, the Hebrew, 31
Tauler, 266
Taurobolium, 72
Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, 18
Temple, destruction of, 6
Teresa, St., 235
Tertullian, 77, 99, 102, 122, 132, 135
Tetzel, 313–14
Theodora, 190
Theodoric, 178, 217
Theodorus of Mopsuestia, 183
Theodosius the Great, 166, 167–9, 170, 172, 176, 179, 192, 231
Theodotus, 127
Theophilus of Antioch, 40
Thirty Years War, 327–330
Thomas Aquinas, 235, 246
—— à Kempis, 265
Thoth, 46, 96
Thrace, heresy in, 249
Tiberius, 134
Tiridates, 157
Tithes, 211, 240, 252
Toledo, Council of, 189
Tolstoy, 383
Torquemada, 289
Torture, use of, 133, 263
Traditores, 138
Trajan, 102
Transubstantiation, 236–9
Transylvania, Prince of, 328
Trent, Council of, 342
Triads, Egyptian, 151
Trinity, doctrine of, 126–128, 149–151, 167, 234, 244, 356
Trivium, 291
Truce of God, 241
Turks, the, 274, 377–380
Twelve apostles, myth of, 3, 17–21, 32, 33
Typhon, 21, 69

Ulphilas, 176
Unitarianism, 245, 336, 352, 358, 373, 389

United States, religion in, 332, 372–4, 393
Universities, rise of, 311
Urania, 66
Urban II. (Pope), 274
Usury, papal, 226
Utopia, 299

Valens, 166, 167, 191, 231
Valentinian, 165–6, 173, 191, 192
—— II., 168–9, 173
Valentinus, 115
Valerian, 133
Vandals, the, 177, 203
Vaudois, the, 251, 322
Vedas, 150
Vegetation, symbol of, 9; Gods of, 63
Venice, 379
Verona, Council of, 286
Vesalius, 343
Vespasian, 135
Victory, Goddess of, 142, 168, 172
Vico, 362
Vienne and Lyons, churches of, 133
Vigilantius, 181
Virgil, 295
Virgilius, the priest, 245
Virgin-mother myth, 44, 63, 62, 181
Visigoths, religion of, 178
Vladimir, 213
Voltaire, 353, 358, 397
Vulgate, the, 12

Wafer, the consecrated, 29, 238–9
Waldenses, 251
Wallenstein, 329
War, Christianity and, 386–90
Washington, 373
Wazon of Liège, 253
Wends, conversion of, 213–4
Wesel, John of, 310, 313
Wessel, John, 310, 311, 313
Wiclif, 254, 312
Widow's son, myth of, 45
Widows in early Church, 85
Wier, John, 339–40
William of Occam, 287
Witchcraft mania, 284, 338–340
Women and Christianity, 84–85, 101, 116, 262–3, 367
Worms, Diet of, 315

Xavier, 363

York, early Christians at, 99

Zacharias, Pope, 220
Zechariah, book of, 9
Zeller, 370
Zendavesta, 71
Zeno, 185
Zenobia, 128
Zeus, 44, 67, 126, 234
Zoroaster, 2
Zulus, conquest of, 216
Zurich, 333, 370
Zwingli, 316, 333, 334

MAY 1 3 1915

PDF created by Rajesh Arya, Gujarat (20 Feb 2025)